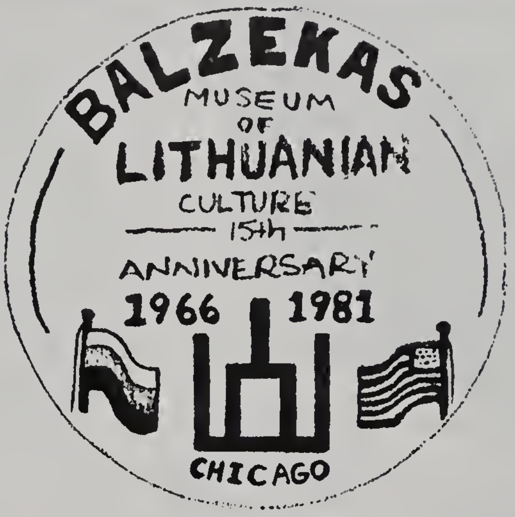
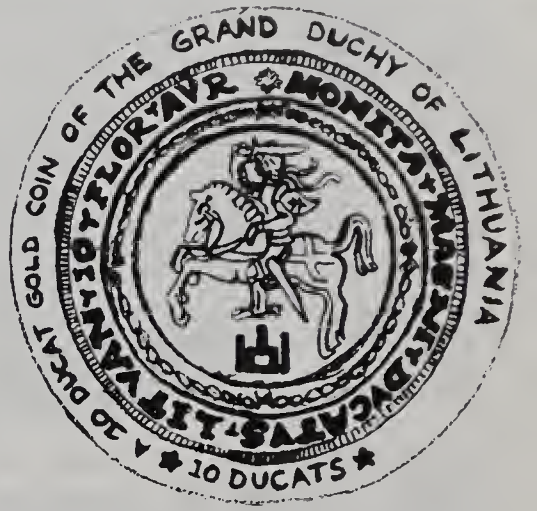
THE KNIGHT

VOL. IV. No. 1 Issue #19 The Lithuanian Numismatic Association June-July 1981 $2.00

MUSEUM ISSUES TOKEN




A 10 DUCAT GOLD COIN OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LITHUANIA
10 DUCATS
10 FLOR·AVR ·MONETA·MAGNI·DVCATVS·LITVAN·

The Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, 4012 Archer Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60632, has issued a special 2 inch wooden "10 Ducats" token to commemorate its 15th anniversary. Designed by numismatic curator Frank Passic with coin artwork by Mark Mitchell, the reverse features a drawing of one of Lithuania's most prestigeous coins, the 1562 gold 10 ducats.

The obverse reads, "BALZEKAS MUSEUM OF LITHUANIAN CULTURE 15th ANNIVERSARY 1966-1981." To the left is depicted the Lithuanian national flag (tri-color), and on the right an American flag. In the center is the Lithuanian symbol of sovereignty, the "Columns of Gediminas," which originated with the founding of the Lithuanian capital city of Vilnius in the year 1323. Below the symbol is the name of the city, "CHICAGO," where the museum is located at, and the city which contains a large Lithuanian-American population.

The 10 ducat pictured on the reverse features the Lithuanian national symbol Vytis (Knight) in the center. This Lithuanian coin was minted in 1562 during the reign of Grand Duke Sigismund August, who ruled as Grand Duke of Lithuania from 1544 to 1572. Known as the "Lithuanian Portugaler," the coin was minted in the capital city of Vilnius, and was also known internationally as "10 Florens." The abbreviated Latin inscription, "10 FLOR AVR MONETA MAGNI DVCATVS LITVAN" around the edge is translated around the perimeter of the token reverse: "A 10 DUCAT GOLD COIN OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LITHUANIA." A coin of great rarity in the numismatic world, the 10 ducat gold coin reflects the glory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during it's days of power before the Union with Poland (1569).

Tokens are 50¢ each and a legal size envelope self-addressed-stamped-envelope. In 1978 the museum issued another 2" wooden token to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the declaration of Lithuanian independence. A dozen or so

(continued on page 2....)

LITH. TOKEN ARTICLE IN "THE NUMISTMATIST"

A major article about Lithuanian numismatics entitled, "Lithuanian-American Lodge Tokens of Chicago" by Frank Passic appeared in the May 1981 issue of the publication journal The Numismatist, the official publication of the American Numismatic Association.

A lengthy 14 pages long, the article focuses on the history of Lithuanian immigrants to the city of Chicago in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the tokens issued by the various lodges. The cited collection of Lithuanian-American tokens was based on the listing and research done by the late Dr. Alexander M. Račkus who originally assembled the collection in the late 1940's. The actual collection is on permanent exhibit at the Balzekas Museum, which acquired Račkus' collection upon his death in 1965.

Featured are numerous photos of the various Lithuanian parish lodges, as well as brief histories of each one. Ample room is devoted to numismatic statistics, and token inscriptions/translations. The Knight readers will remember we first re-published Dr. Račkus' original listing of these tokens in our Vols. I and II. Mr. Passic has added much additional research material which acquainted the non-Lithuanian numismatist about Lithuanians in the city of Chicago.

A copy of the May issue should be in the library of all Lithuanian numismatists. Copies are $2.00 each by writing: A.N.A., P.O. Box 2366, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80901. When writing, mention the article and the LNA.

2. MUSEUM TOKEN...

of these 1978 tokens are left, and can be purchased for 50¢ each and a S.A.S.E. The museum has a nice selection of Lithuanian modern coins for sale, as well as several Lith. coin books and Lithuanian coin holders.

The Balzekas museum was formally opened in June of 1966, and is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year. It is open daily to the public from 1 to 4 PM daily, including Sundays & holidays. Telephone #: (312) 847-2441.

COIN WORLD ARTICLE

Lithuanian paper money was one of the articles featured in the special pull out section of the Memphis Paper Money Show, in the June 10, 1981 issue of Coin World, page 38.

An article by L.N.A. member John Glynn of London, England was entitled, "Lithuanian Republic slow to Issue Currency." The 1 page article featured a photo of the 5 centai "temporary" banknote of 1922, and the 1928 100 Litų banknote. Ample space was devoted to the life of Vladas Jurgutis, president of the bank of Lithuania. The majority of this article previous appeared here in The Knight Vol. I, No. 6, April-May 1979.

We encourage our L.N.A. members with writing abilities to submit Lithuanian numismatic articles to the various publications. It increases our specialty, and brings in new members. Be sure to give mention to the LNA and our box number.

Congratulations, John on your fine article!

CORRECTION

In our last issue in the article about the Virtuti Militari decoration, we mentioned that on Kosciuska's strap that the round/oval piece was the Virtuti Militari decoration medal (the very first issued). This is incorrect--it is actually a buckle on the strap, according to the author of the article, Henry L. Gaidis.

THE KNIGHT

Volume IV, No. 1, Issue #19. The official publication of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association. Frank Passic, Albion, Michigan, EDITOR. Robert J. Douchis, Baltimore, Maryland, DIRECTOR. Subscription for 6 bi-monthly issues (June to June) a donation of $10 or more (U.S. & Canada), $20 overseas. Write: Lithuanian Numismatic Association, P.O. Box 612, Columbia, Maryland 21045.

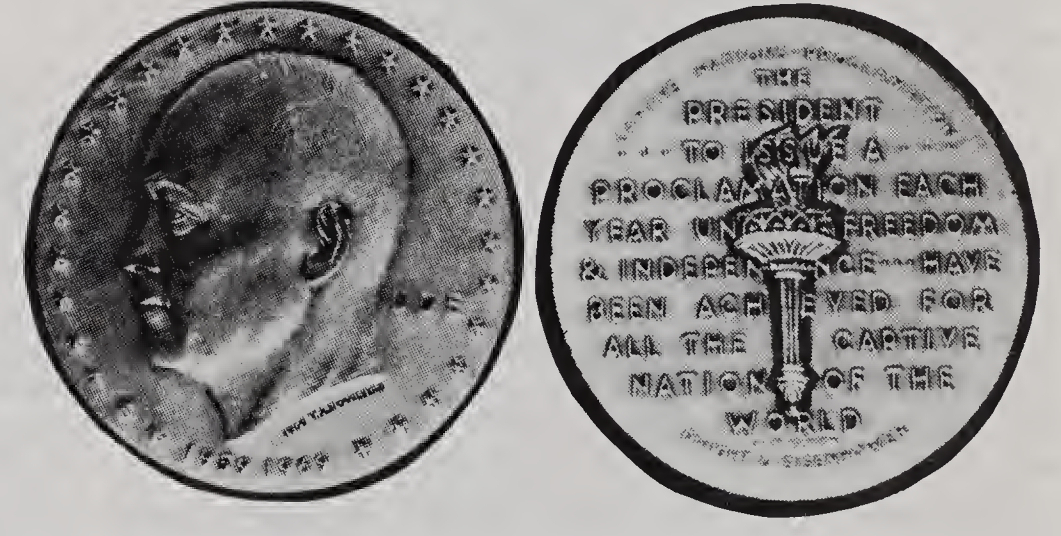
FROM THE ARCHIVES

From our archives we dug up from the not-too-distant past the Captive Nations Eisenhower Proclamation Medal, which was issued in 1969. With Ronald Reagan now President, the "captive nations," of which Lithuania is one of them, again have a friend in the White House.

The Captive Nations medal was issued in both .999 silver and in bronze, 1 1/2 inches in diameter. The silver medals were serially numbered, and originally cost $10. The bronze sold for $2.50 each.

The Captive Nations proclamation given by Dwight D. Eisenhower in July of 1959 is stated on the reverse of the medal: "THE PRESIDENT TO ISSUE A PROCLAMATION EACH YEAR UNTIL FREEDOM & INDEPENDENCE HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED FOR ALL THE CAPTIVE NATIONS OF THE WORLD." In the center is the torch of freedom.

The obverse features a bust of Eisenhower, and the date "1959-1969" signifying the 10th anniversary of the proclamation. Medals were ordered from the Captive Nations Friends Committee in Chicago.


1959 1969
THE PRESIDENT TO ISSUE A PROCLAMATION EACH YEAR UNTIL FREEDOM & INDEPENDENCE HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED FOR ALL THE CAPTIVE NATIONS OF THE WORLD

CALLING ALL AUSTRALIANS

In looking at our membership roster, we find that we have only ONE (1) member in Australia, a country which has a sizeable Lithuanian in exile population. Our member there is Baltic News, member #157.

We know that the Lithuanians there are very active, and that there ARE collectors down there: several Li. pattern pieces have come from Australia in recent years.

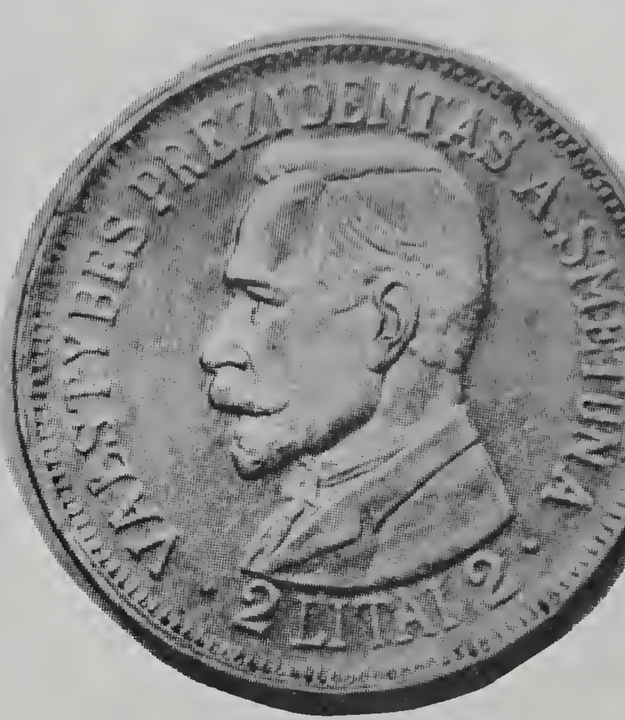
We also know that to maintain the success of our specialty, we must have the input of everyone, in order to gain valuable information & research, before all the "oldtimers" die off.

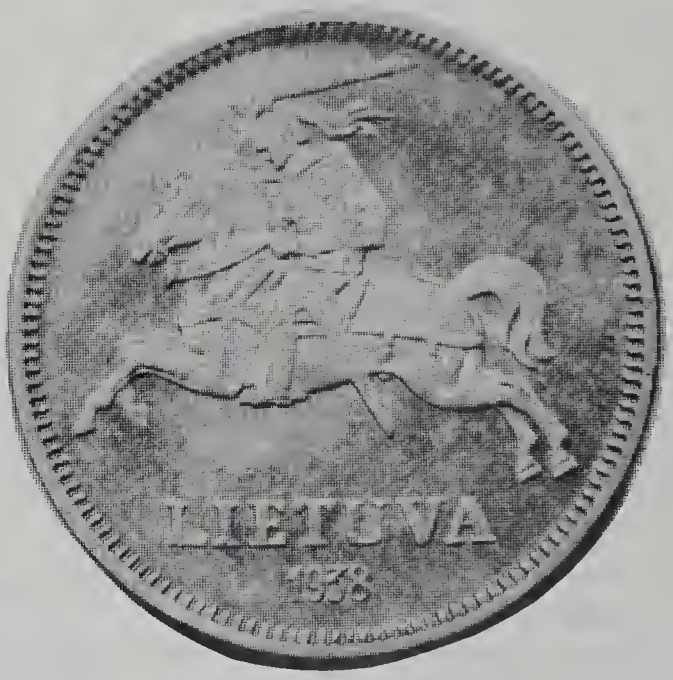
Therefore, this is a call for all Lithuanian numismatic collectors in Australia to contact us! We need you! For our LNA members here in the U.S. & Canada, if you know of a collector in Australia, give us their name & address plus $3 donation if possible ($2 printing & $1 costs) and we'll send them a free issue.

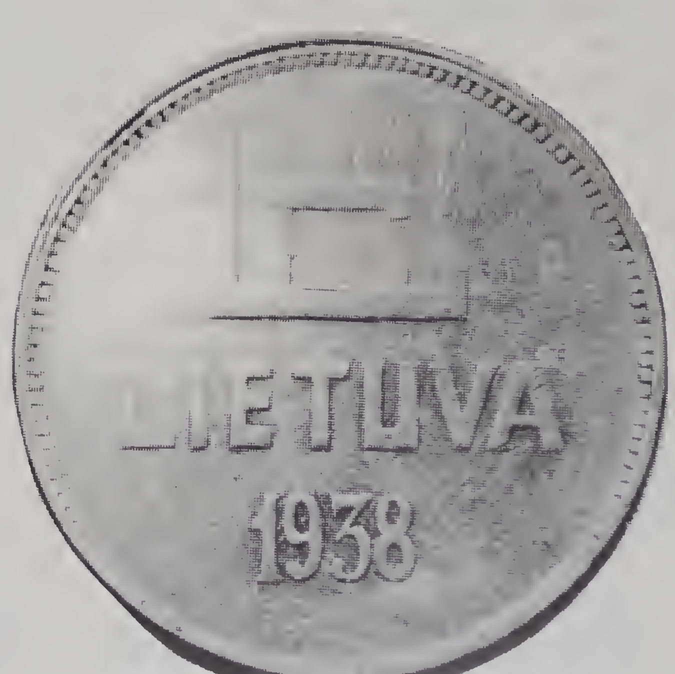
We know of no other Lithuanian numismatic group in existence, and what we are doing we feel is a first as we tread fertile ground and explore unexplored avenues. Let us all contribute our knowledge to make the LNA a success!

COIN OF THE MONTH, By Frank Passic, Albion, Michigan.

THE COIN THAT NEVER WAS: 1938 2 LITAI PATTERN







In 1938 the Lithuanian government proposed to mint a new 2 litai coin in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of independence. Trial pieces were struck in Belgium and sent back to Lithuania for approval.

The obverse of all trial pieces features a bust of Lithuanian president Antanas Smetona facing left. The text reads, "VALSTYBES PREZIDENTAS A. SMETONA 2 LITAI 2." Translation: "State President Antanas Smetona 2 Lits."

Note: The denomination is designated as 2 Litai. The old 2 litu coins minted in 1925 were designated as "2 litu ", which was according to the old declention system, which was dropped.

There are two types of reverse designs which were struck. The first is the traditional "Vytis/LIETUVA" design, bearing the date of 1938. The majority of the known patterns bear this design. It is assumed that this design was the first minted for government officials.

However, since 1938 was also the anniversary year, and the 10 Litų coin of that year bore an anniversary design, the die makers in Belgium also prepared a "Columns of Gediminas" design, with "LIETUVA 1938" below the symbol.

Lithuanian financial officials had to decide between the two reverse designs, and unfortunately were unable to complete their arrangements, due to the approaching World War II. These arrangements included: the shipping of dies and silver planchets across hostile Europe (Germany seized Klaipėda in March of 1939).

Below are the known patterns of the 1938 2 Litai, with L.N.A. catalog #, and "trends":

LNA #	Vytis reverse
15a	brass, edge lettered vertically: LIETUVA • LIETUVA • LIETUVA • $300
15b	.800 silver, 5.4 gr. 23 mm. Reeded edge. $350
15c	Silver, lettered edge (as 15a) $350
15d	Silver, plain edge $425
	Columns Reverse
16a	Silver, plain edge $800
16b	Silver, lettered edge (as 15a)[2 known] $1,000

Some individual examples of the various patterns went to Vladas Stašinskas, president of the Bank of Lithuania. His son, Vytautas later became Lithuanian Consular at New York, and obtained some. Jonas K. Karys' 1953 book uses Vytautas Stašinskas' example in his book for a photograph.

However, the Belgian mintmaster also had in his personal collection a number of Lith. patterns which were sold nearly 10 years ago, since the coins were struck at the Belgian mint. A small hoard also surfaced several years ago, apparently from the Belgian mint, and these are what appeared on the numismatic market in the late 1970's.

Those with "Columns" reverse are rare, and only 2 examples of #16b (lettered edge) are known. It would not be surprising if a reeded edge Columns reverse surfaced in the future.

4. AN INTRODUCTION TO ORDERS AND DECORATIONS

In subsequent issues we will present in detail one by one each decoration, Order, and Medal of the Republic of Lithuania, reproducing an original presentation document and translation into the English language. The medals especially should attract the interest of the eager Lithuanian numismatist.

This is being done exclusively in The Knight by members Vincent Alones and Henry Gaidis. As is the case with any article published, your opinions and comments are most desired. Only with such imput can we guage the material we are presenting with the interest of our members. We would also appreciate members sending us photocopies of presentation certificates, etc.

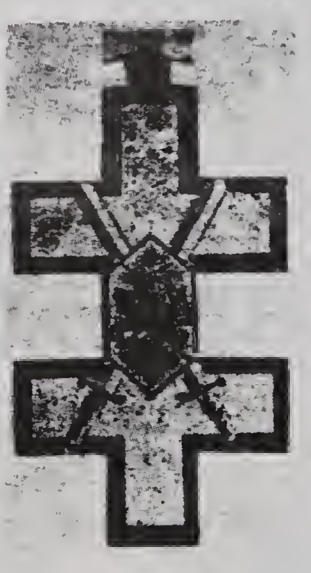
What we are doing is a FIRST anywhere in the English language, and is the result of alot of research and hard translation work. If you know of an exLithuanian military person, or hobbyist in military medals, be sure they know about this!

The following is the tentative order in which we plan to approach Lithuanian decorations:

1. Cross of Vytis
2. Order of Gediminas & Medal
3. Order of Cross of Vytis &'Medal'
4. Order of Vytautas the Great
5. Volunteer
6. Klaipėda liberation
7. Invalid
8. 10 year commemorative of independ.
9. National Guard badge/star
10. 20 year commemorative medals (army, navy, airforce)
11. Life Saving
12. Military Academy badges
13. Police
14. National Guard in Exile
15. Boy & Girl Scouts (11 medals)
16. Military Labor Service
17. Lith. Veterans Organizations
18. Insignia
19. Society badges

Orders & Decorations for the Republic of Lithuania were manufactured by the Hugugna Brothers in LeLocle, Switzerland. The following is an introduction taken from the Encyclopedia Lituanica Vol II (D-J) Pgs. 46-48:

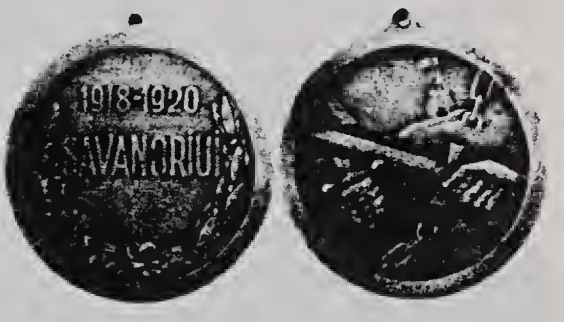
DECORATIONS AND ORDERS. The first decorations of honor in Lithuania were authorized in 1919 in "orders of the day" by the general of the army in recognition of acts of bravery performed during the wars of independence, and tentatively called *The Cross for the Country*. The recipients were presented only with a ribbon and the certificate of award, because at that time the medal had not been designed. On Feb. 3, 1920 the President officially named the cross *Vyčio Kryžius*, that is, the Cross of *Vytis* (the Knight), the state emblem of Lithuania, and determined that the medal should be a replica of the double cross seen on the state emblem. The medals were issued 18 months later in 1921. There were two classes of the Cross of *Vytis:* the first with swords and the second without swords; each class comprised three grades. 1433 persons, including the Unknown Soldier, were decorated with the Cross of *Vytis*. Despite its military character the Cross of *Vytis*, the only decoration in Lithuania until 1928, was also used as a token of courtesy in international relations of Lithuania. During that period the Cross of *Vytis* was conferred upon 82 persons of foreign countries, among them King Vittorio Emmanuele II of Italy and Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg, president of the Republic of Germany.


The Cross of Vytis

In 1928, on the 10th anniversary of the Republic of Lithuania, the *Order of Gediminas* was instituted in five grades, to reward persons for outstanding performance in civil and public offices. In 1930, on the 500th anniversary of the death of Vytautas the Great, the *Order of Vytautas the Great* was established to honor persons, native or foreign, for distinguished services to Lithuania, contributions to the Lithuanian nation or to the welfare of mankind. This had five grades, the Golden Chain of the Order being the highest grade. Accordingly, the Cross of *Vytis* was also converted into the *Order of the Cross of Vytis*, which retained the two classes in three grades each, with two upper grades added to the first class. The Order of Vytautas the Great was the highest decoration of Lithuania, the Order of the Cross of *Vytis* the second and the Order of Gediminas the third.

The system of decorations was extended further by establishing corresponding medals for each order. The medals were of gold, silver and bronze. The medals of Vytautas and Gediminas were of conventional shape, the medal of the Order of the Cross of *Vytis* retained the particular shape of the double cross, and it was referred to as the cross instead of medal. Other medals established and conferred under public law regulations were the following:

The Independence Medal, issued in 1928 commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Republic, for distinction in the cause of national independence. It was conferred also on persons who had joined state or local government service in the early days of independence (1918–1920) and had continued to serve honorably until the 10th anniversary. The *Medal of the Founding Volunteers (Savanorių - Kūrėjų)* was issued in November 1928, marking the 10th anniversary of the armed forces of the Republic; it was conferred on all who volunteered for the army at the time of its founding or during the wars of independence in 1918–20. Approximately 12,000 persons were recognized as Founding Volunteers, about 100 women and 100 American Lithuanians among them. The *Medal for the Liberation of Klaipėda* was issued to those who had taken part in the uprising of Klaipėda in January 1923, which resulted in the annexation of the Klaipėda territory to the Republic of Lithuania.



The Medal of the Founding Volunteers

Two organizations chartered by special public laws had the right of conferring decorations of their own: *Šaulių Sąjunga* (q.v.; Home Guardians), and the League of Boy and Girl Scouts of Lithuania. The first instituted the *Order of Šaulių Žvaigždė* (Guardian's Star) and the medal of that order, while the scouts had a series of eight badges of honor, most of them parallel to those used by international scout organizations.

Under Soviet rule from 1944 the decorations of independent Lithuania have been banned. Converted forcibly into a Soviet Republic, Lithuania does not have any decorations of her own. The right of conferring orders, medals or simply titles of honor, such as "People's Artist of the Soviet Union," is reserved to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union. All that the local authorities may bestow upon a person in Lithuania is a "Letter of Honor," the title of "People's Artist of the Republic" or a title of "Meritorious Worker" in arts, in the fields of culture, education, medicine, agronomy, construction or in other specialties.

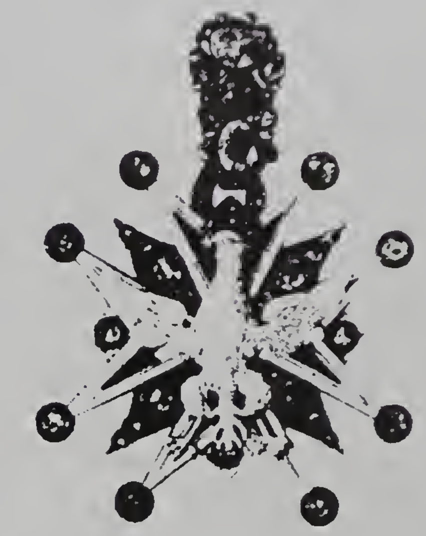
We present here and now conclude our preliminary 2 articles about the medieval joint Lithuanian/Polish Orders & Decorations. While not purely Lithuanian, the Virtuti Militari and the Order of the White Eagle were awarded to Lithuanians, and thus we have acquainted you with them.

THE ORDER OF THE WHITE EAGLE

By LNA members Vincent Alones and Henry L. Gaidis

Legend places the establishment of the Order of the White Eagle in 1325 by order of the Polish king Jogailą to commemorate the marriage of his son Casimir to Aldona, the daughter of Grand Duke Gediminas of Lithuania. A formal treaty between pagan Lithuania and Christian Poland that year allowed for free trade through the province of Masuria and unified defenses against the Teutonic Knights. As was the custom in Medieval Europe, the treaty was furthered and strengthened by a marriage between the children of the two rulers. Aldona agreed to become a Christian and was baptised Anna.

The Order of the White Eagle was established among the leading nobles of the two countries. The following year saw the combined forces of Lithuania and Poland attacking the Teutonic Knights, but this friendship deteriorated in 1330 when the Poles failed to appear on the battlefield in support of Grand Duke Gediminas of Lithuania. With the deterioration of their mutual pact, the Order of the White Eagle ceased to exist.



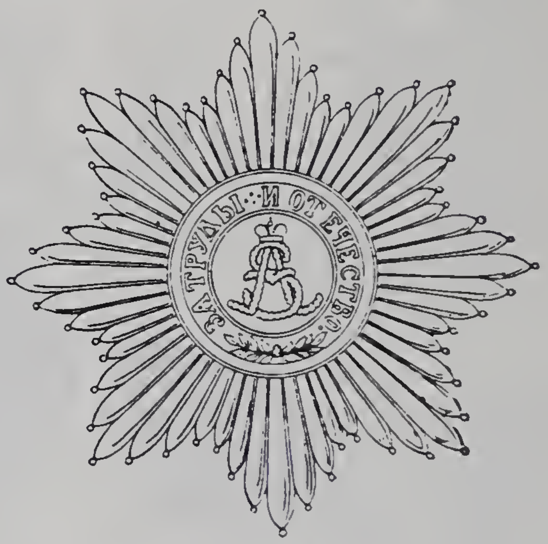
(Badge) Order of the White Eagle
Type I

BADGE: (Type I — Kingdom) Eight pointed, gold rimmed, white bordered, red enamel cross, each point tipped with a diamond. Between each arm of the cross appear rays of diamond inserts. Superimposed on the cross is a crowned Polish white eagle with wings outstretched. Badge suspended from a diamond encrusted ornamentation.

In 1703 when Augustus II was obliged to flee from the Polish provinces, which were then occupied by the Swedes under Charles XII during the Great Northern War 1700-1721. August II distributed amongst a number of high personages who had remained true to him, a medal appended to a narrow blue ribbon, which bore on the obverse a White Eagle with the legend, "Pro Fide, Rege, Lege," which translates, "For religion, king, and law." On the reverse was the initials, "A.R." The king was to receive the medal with the crown as Grand Master. The number of knights to the Order was limited to 72.

The official accepted establishment of the Order of the White Eagle is 1713, by the elected Saxon King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, Frederick Augustus II, conferred the Order on Peter the Great of Russia in reciprocation for the Order of Saint Andrew. At that time Poland, Russia, and Dennmark were allies opposing the Swedish supremacy in the Baltic region.

It is believed this order was revived in order to provide an ancient and honorable decoration comparable to the Russian decoration. Thereafter the Order was conferred on numerous Lithuanian and Polish noblemen who from August desired to gain support.



Above: Russian version until 1831.

With the military and political decline of the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth, the Order fell into disfavor until the period of the Duchy of Warsaw (1807-1814), when it again was conferred on recipients for exceptional merit to the Kingdom. With the defeat of Napoleon, the Order continued to be conferred by Russian Czar Alexander I on Lithuanians and Poles who supported his reign. With the failure of the 1831 Lithuanian-Polish Insurrection, the Order of the White Eagle was incorporated into the decorations of the Imperial Russian Government by Czar Nicholas I. The Order of the White Eagle was thereafter awarded to Russian subjects in general until the 1917 revolution.

The newly formed Polish Republic revived the Order of the White Eagle on February 4, 1921, as its highest decoration which continues to the present day. The Order of the White Eagle is awarded in one class and presented for outstanding civil or military merit to the nation. The Order can be conferred on foreigners who perform a major service to the people.

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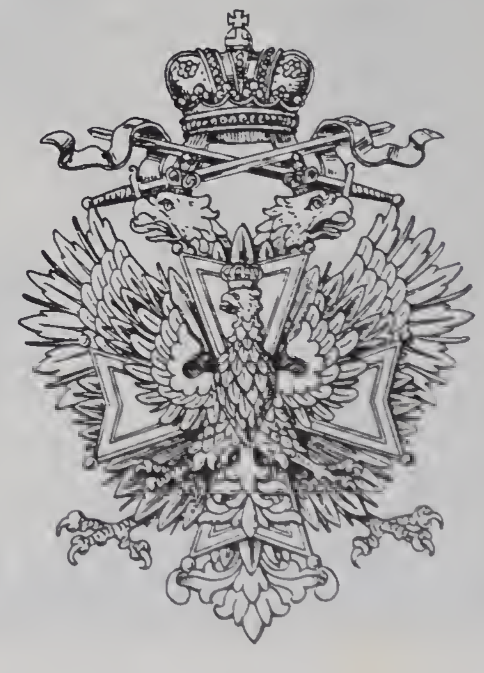
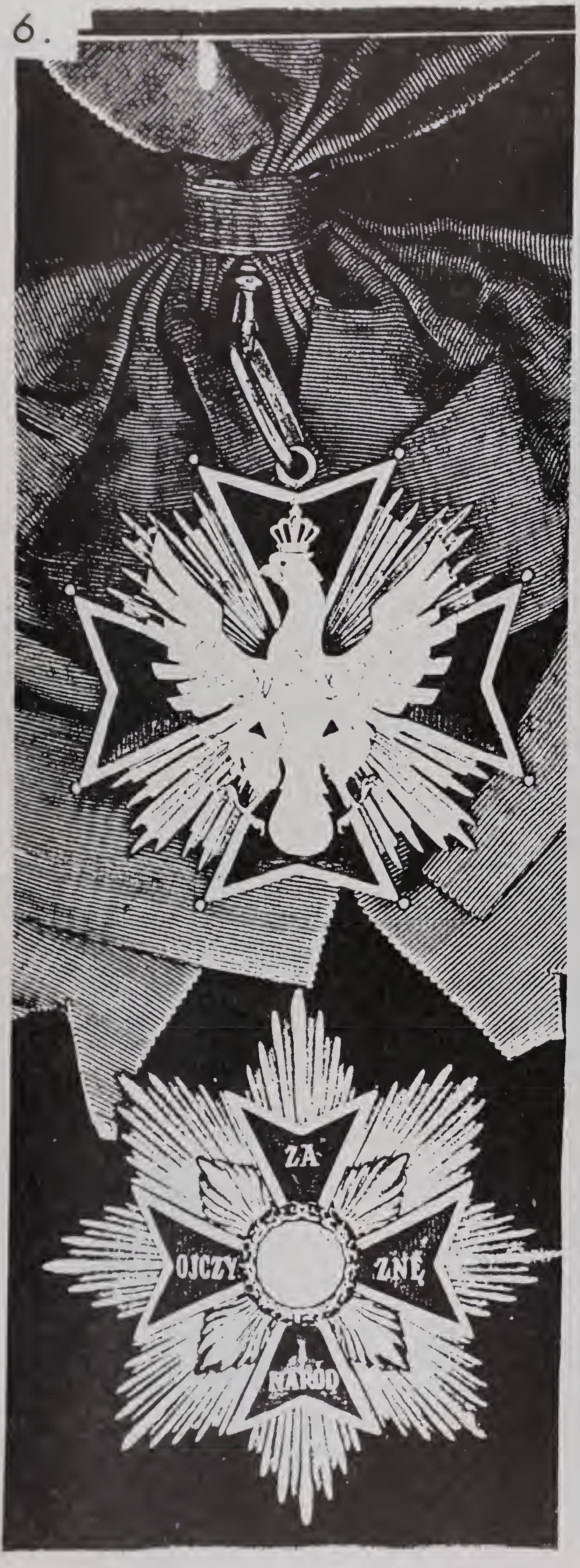


At right: Russian version after 1831 until the 1917 Revolution.



Originally the badge of the Order of the White Eagle was an 8 pointed red enamel star bordered in white with a gold rim and each point tipped with a diamond. Superimposed on the cross was a crowned Polish Eagle with outstretched wings. Between each arm of the cross rays, diamonds were inserted and the badge was suspended from a diamond encrusted ornamentation. Examination of paintings of Lithuanian and Polish noblemen reveals that the Order was worn in several different manners. It is frequently observed being worn from a collar or ribbon around the neck and also from a sash worn across the breast. Though details are lacking, the Order was also worn with a silver embroidered 8 pointed breast star on the left breast superimposed with a red and white maltese cross.

Under Russian issuance, the Order of the White eagle was superimposed in its original design, minus the diamonds, onto the breast of a black Imperial Russian double-headed eagle having golden heads. When awarded for military valor, gold crossed swords appear between the eagle and the Imperial Crown. Likewise the Russian Order utilized a gold 8-pointed breast star superimposed with a small white cross with red edges and a light blue enamel band around a gold rosette. The blud band was inscribed in gold "For Faith, King, and Law." The decoration was worn with a light blue sash ribbon four inches wide from the left shoulder to the right hip where it terminates into a bow which hangs the badge. In Russia there was no festival of the Order.

The Republic of Poland restored the Order of the White Eagle, and this is the most common version of the Order encountered by the collector. This decoration conforms to the design utilized by the Commonwealth, but omits the diamonds and utilizes a more traditional spread winged eagle. The center of the breast star bears the initials "R.P." for the Republic of Poland, and the inscription, "For Country & the People" on the cross forearms. The festival is held on May 3 which is the general "Jour de Fete" in Poland.

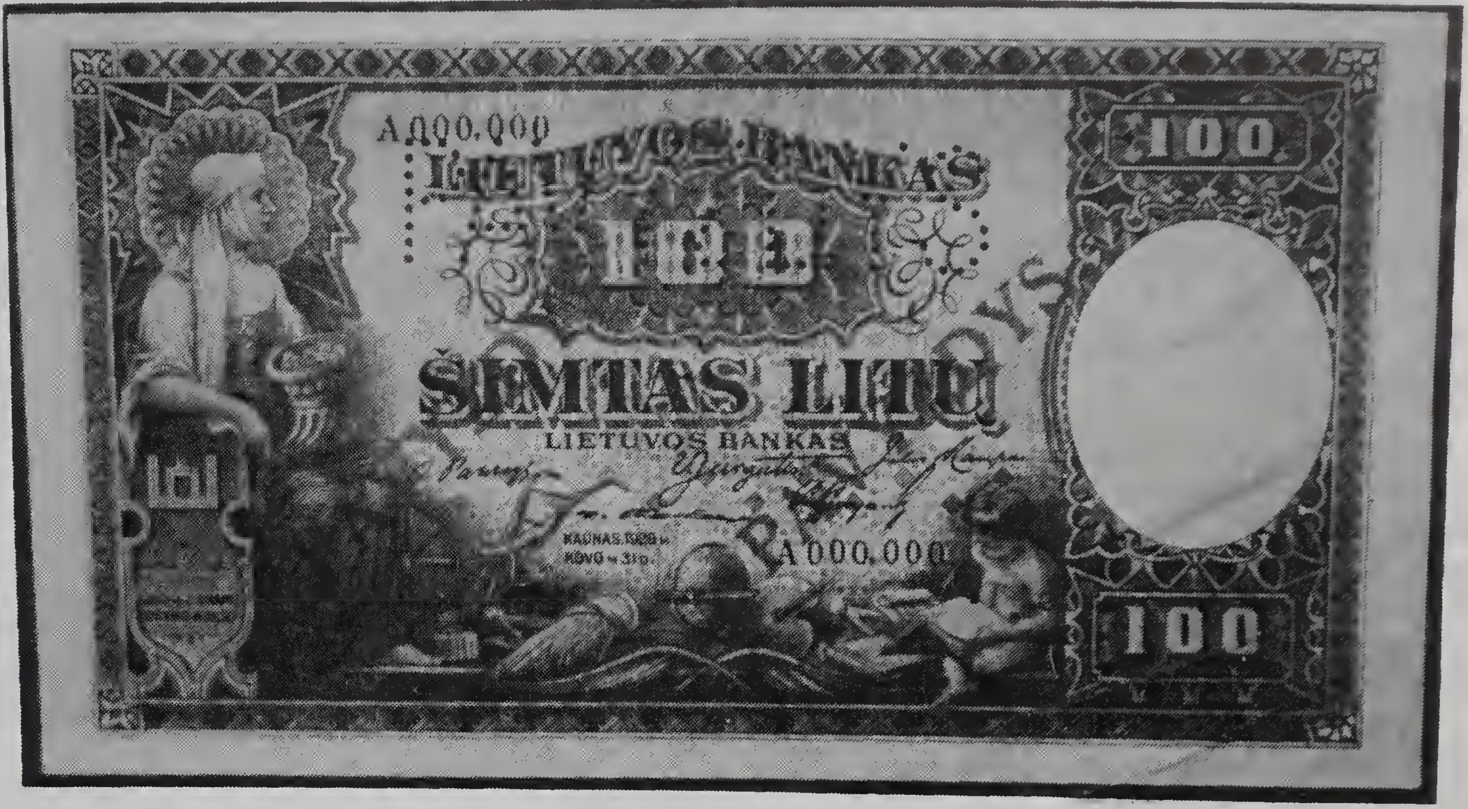
Under the communist reign at present the crown is omitted from the head of the White Eagle. The eagle design was not utilized by the Republic of Lithuania in as much as the eagle is generally regarded as a foreign emblem to Lithuanians.

BADGE: (Type II — Republic) Gold rimmed, white bordered, eight pointed, red enamel cross, each point gold ball tipped. Between the arms of the cross appear gold rays. Superimposed on the cross is a white gold crowned, Polish eagle. Reverse has the initials *R.P.* surrounded by a green enamel wreath.

STAR: (Type II) Eight pointed silver star with a white rimmed red enamel cross superimposed. On the forearms of the cross is inscribed *OJCZY/ZA/ZNE/I. NAROD* (For Country and the People). Center medallion has the initials *R.P.* in gold surrounded by a laurel wreath.

RIBBON: Light blue moire.

MEET THE PICTURE: ELENA TURAUSKAS



At first you might wonder a bit about our strange title in this month's "Meet the..." series, but we focus this month on a very special lady: Elena Turauskas, whose portrait appears on the obverse of the P-25 100 Litų dated March 3, 1928!

Mrs. Turauskas is the wife of the late Edward Turauskas, who served as Lithuanian diplomat to France.

She was born March 15, 1906 in Paris, France, and became active in women's organizations and secretarial work. She met her husband and traveled to free Lithuania, where she was involved in women's society organizations. Her maiden name was Jankauskas.

Recently Mrs. Turauskas, who is still living, visited her sister who lives in Chicago, and the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture. LNA member Jonas Augustinus interviewed her for us.

She recalled that Artist Adomas Galdikas had asked her to pose for a portrait at his studios, and it was taking several sittings. Due to her busy schedule, she made a photograph of herself and it was from this photograph that Galdikas finalized the design for the 100 Litų banknote. She received no money for the use of her portrait on the banknote.

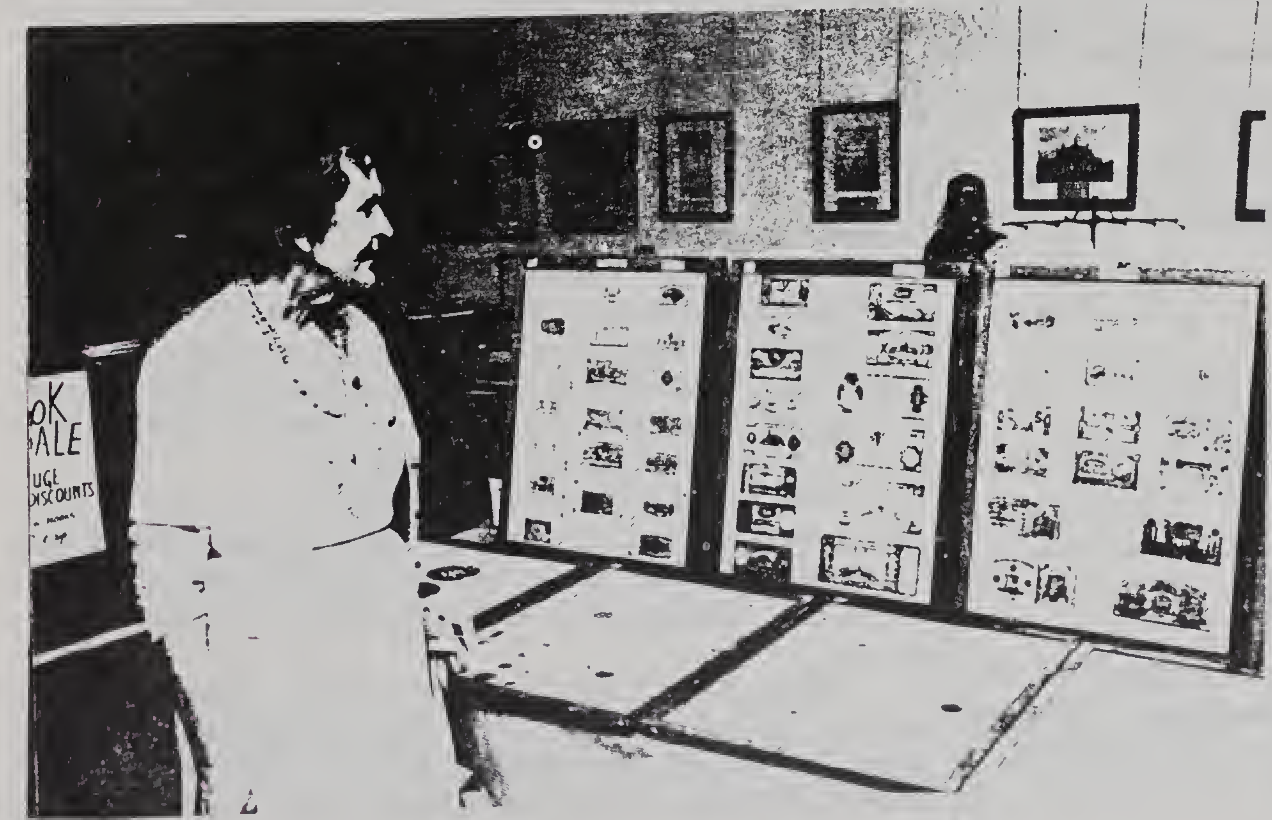
On the banknote, the Lithuanian lady in national costume is shown holding the mythical "horn of plenty", her right arm resting on the "Columns of Gediminas" symbol. At her feet are symbols of commerce, agriculture, art, industry, etc. The woman pictured is a married Lithuanian mother, as indicated by her long wrapped-around scarf.

While visiting the Balzekas Museum, Mrs. Turauskas viewed a Lithuanian paper money exhibit by Jonas Augustinus, and posed for a photograph, using the pose similar to that on the 100 litų banknote.[pictured, lower left]

On many banknotes of the world, legendary mythical creatures are often portrayed to symbolize a particular country's heritage, but not on Lithuania's 100 Litų! Here we have a real lady being given the real honor of being a part of real money, and representing a real country and heritage!

The loo Litų note was printed by Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co. in New Malden, England, as were all of the later banknotes issued by the Bank of Lithuania.

Currently on the numismatic market the note sells for around $90 in UNC, $75 in XF, $50 in VF, and $20 in VG. The note pictured above is a printer's PAVYZDYS specimen, bearing the serial # A000,000.



Above: Mrs. Turauskas poses in the Balzekas Museum.

WANT -ADS

Want & For Sale Ads are a FREE service to LNA members. Write us and place your own ad in The Knight!

WANTED: The following Lithuanian modern coins in XF or UNC only. Will pay Lith. coin trends:
LNA #1 1 Centas 1925
LNA #4 1925 20 Centų
LNA #5 1925 50 Centų
LNA #11 1936 5 Centai
Stan N. Gaizutis, 210 Bret Harte Ave., Reno, Nevada 89509.

- - -

WANTED: The following Lithuanian banknotes in "Fine" condition or better: (Pick #'s)
#4 50 Centų "temporary" 1922
#5 1 Litas "temporary" 1922
#6 5 Litai "temporary" 1922
#12 50 Centų "permanent" 1922
#15 5 Litai "permanent" 1922 Type I (serial # in black below sower)
#16 5 Litai "permanent" 1922 Type II
#17 5 Litai "permanent" 1922 Type III (Letter #J)
#18 10 Litų 1922 (man on log river raft)
#19 50 Litų 1922 (Gediminas on obv, coats of arms)
#22 1,000 Litų, 1924.
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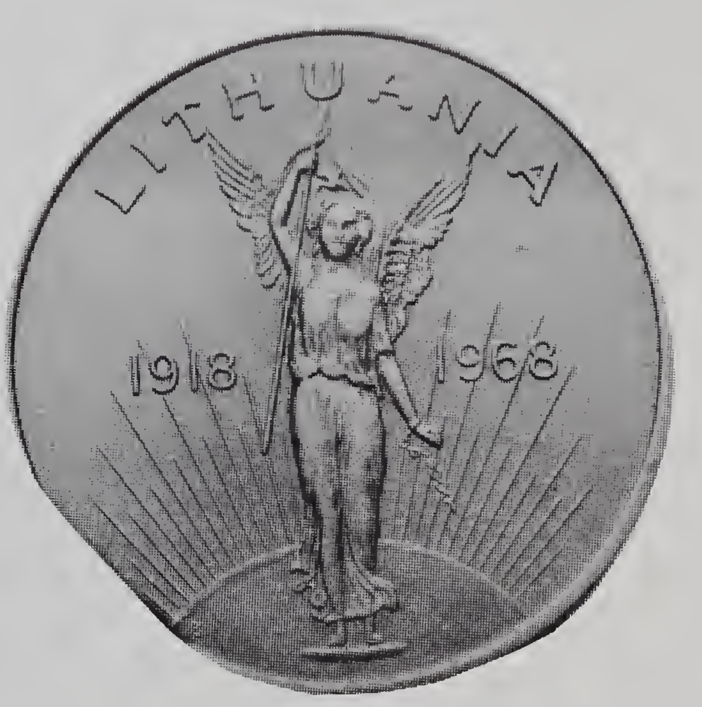
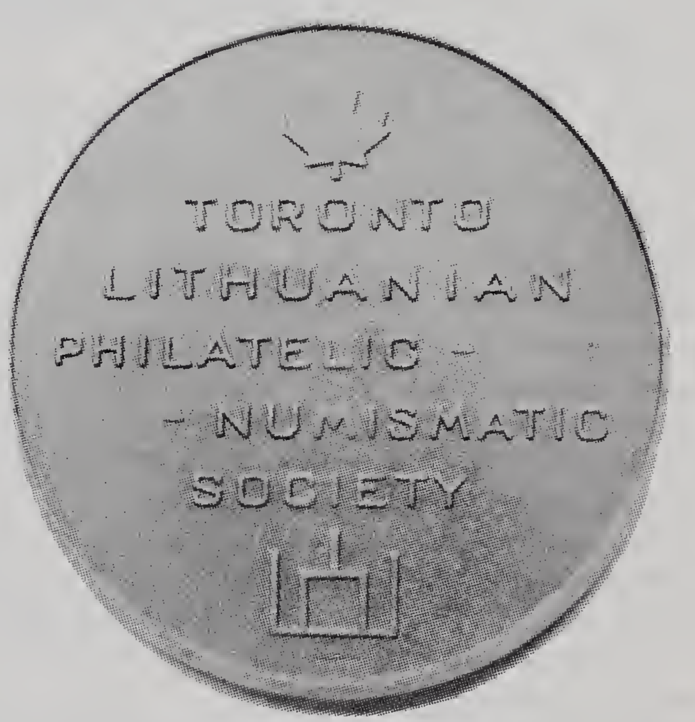
TORONTO MEDAL





Pictured above is the medal issued in 1968 by the Toronto (Canada) Lithuanian Philatelic & Numismatic Society, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Lithuanian Declaration of Independence. Medals were struck by the Wellings mint in both bronze and silver.

The obverse features the Lithuanian statue of freedom, which stood in the park in front of the Vytautas the Great Museum in Kaunas, and which was designed by Juozas Zikaras. The design is copied from the 1928 Independence Medal issued by the Lithuanian government.

One of these medals showed up at the Chicago International Coin Fair this year, and also a few were given away as awards for exhibits at the Lith. Philatelic Exposition in Chicago last year.

Does this Toronto group still exist? If so, we'd like to contact them about information statistics about the medal, and let their members know about our LNA which they would find helpful.

for only one letter, just as did our predecessors. In some of the findings, he seems to cast sort of a thick paleografic pall over some clearly distinguishable letters, seeking to translate them into other systems of writing. However, it seems to become clear to him through that veil that the "poluustovo" letter "viedi" (or VE) normally pronounced "V," while two curved strokes at the sill of the gate uprights appeared to him to be the Jewish alphabets' "vov" ("ve") letter... That is to say, Karazija sees there a "viedi" meaning "ve," but does not understand it as a "V." Fortunately, we have photographs which speak for themselves.

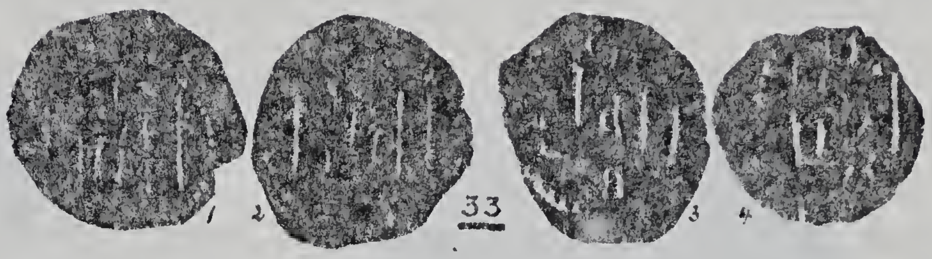


Figure 33. Enlarged photocopies of coins 1-2 with the letter "K" within the Columns of Gediminas. 3-4: with the letter "V" (in example 3, the letter V is struck upside down).

These pictures are taken of coins examined by Karazija. Not only the large letters , but even other clearly perceptible signs in pictures 3 and 4 (above the Arch of Gediminas and at its sill) separate these coins into 2 distinct types.

Type One. On the obverse of the coin, in the field encircled by small dots, the sign of Gediminas dominates. In its center is placed a clearly visible and readable letter "K." On the reverse (see Fig. 31a) likewise circled with fine points, a mounted Knight rides to the right (in heraldry, to the left). The steed and rider appear unnatural. The rider's waist is thin, without a chest. His neck and head remind one of a triangle mounted on a pole. Both arms are let down in a half-arch. The broadsword is distinguished by its unseemly large handle and great crosspiece above the grip. Held in the hand at a small angle, it inclines back toward the rider's head. Spurs, more like a cross, take up a good part of the space underneath the steed's belly. In some of this type coins a small cross can be seen, placed between the heads of the rider and the steed (such specimens had been noted earlier)[20]. This rare visitor on these coins (See Figure 34,b) on other ancient coins in its day has meant: either ten (the Roman X), smaller coin parts, struck in on coin, or that coin was a tenth part of a larger monetary unit.[21]

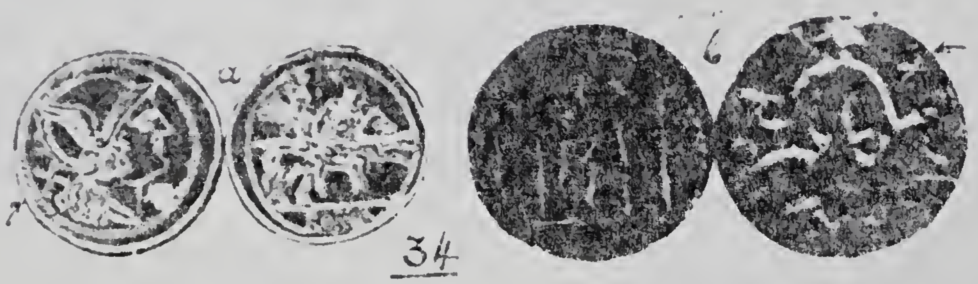


Figure 34. a) An ancient Roman denar (Note the X at the head); b) an enlarged type "K" coin photo. (with the sign X).

Type Two: On the obverse, circled by somewhat larger points, the same sign of Gediminas dominates, and in its square we see the letter "V." Above the square, either to the left or right of the inner upright, there is placed a small letter, which earlier was held to be the letter "L"[or "J"]. We hold the same view (as we shall see, there is a firm foundation therefore). Below the sign of Gediminas we see something else which we do not find in the 1st type. So here, one one coin straighter than on another, are two small characters.

On the reverse side of this type of coin we again see the Rider, but this time with very different lines. The rider has a broad chest, his hands less bent, the right hand holding the broadsword is inclined

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[20] K. Stronczynski has studied the coin with the crosslet. He finds this to be the letter "K" in Gothic style, with which we agree. He was also of the opinion that this coin was struck by Kęstutis ("Pieniažki Kiejstuta W. Ks. Litewskiego"; "Biblioteka Warszawska," Warszawa, IV, 666, 1845).

[21] For example, on the Roman denar, the figure X meant ten. In our K coin type 1, X meant that this coin was a tenth part of some other large piece, since there were no coins smaller than this on in Lithuania during the 14th century.

[To better understand the difference between those of "K" and those of the "V," type, the following explanation is helpful:]

Type 1 (K)	Type 2 (V)
1. The letter K in the center of the Columns	1. The letter "V" will appear in the center.
2. No (two) lines pointing downwards will appear underneath the Columns at the bottom of the coin.	2. Lines pointing downwards will appear under the Columns.
3. No letters appearing like and"L" or "J" or whatever will appear above the top portion of the Columns.	3. Letters will appear above the Columns figure, on either side of the center mast pinnacle.
4. Some coins will have a small "x" on the Vytis side	4. Vytis has short stump-like tail
5. Vytis will appear like a line drawing ; very thin; large spurs and sword handle. Tail hangs out. (see fig. 28, page 115, No. 28b)	

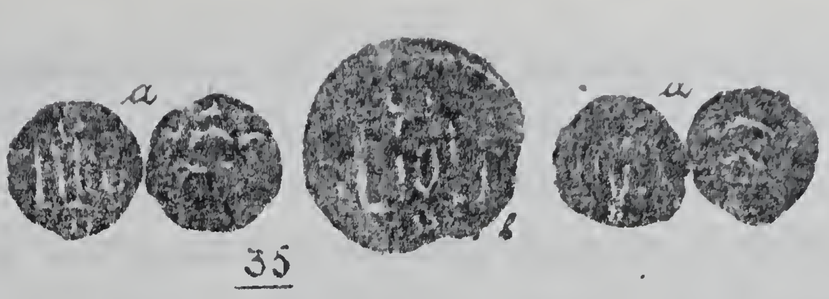

Figure 35. The "V" type coins (a-a) natural size, b) enclarged.

closer to the Rider's head. The steed's tail reminds one of a bald stump grown straight out of the animal's back. This rider differs from the rider on Type 1 by other characteristics, while the steed's tail stum and forward legs definitely recall the Rider placed on the seal of Vytautas (1384-85) as may be seen from the photocopies given below. (Figure 36).

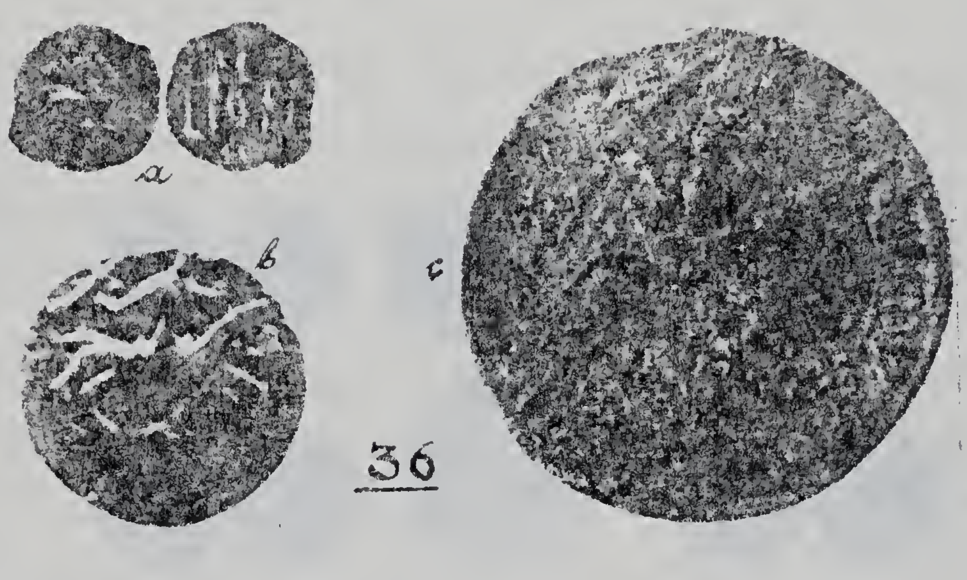

Figure 36. a) the rider on the "V" type coin. b) an enlarged picture of the rider side. c) Rider on the seal of Vytautas (1384-85) from Wl. Semkowicz's "Sfragistyka Vytolda."

Vytautas the Great, by an unknown 16th century painter

Finally, both types of coins described here and pictured by authentic photographs cannot be mixed together, since they are 1) undoubtedly different; 2) not the same issue, and 3) struck in the names of two Grand Dukes ("K" AND "V").

Those two Grand Dukes were, of course, Kęstutis and Vytautas. By all known factors, those coins bearing the letter "K" are by Kęstutis, and those with the letter "V" by Vytautas, Lithuanian "small change" struck at different times, which we will analyze separately, to the smallest details in the following paragraphs.

c) the "small change" of Kęstutis, or denars.

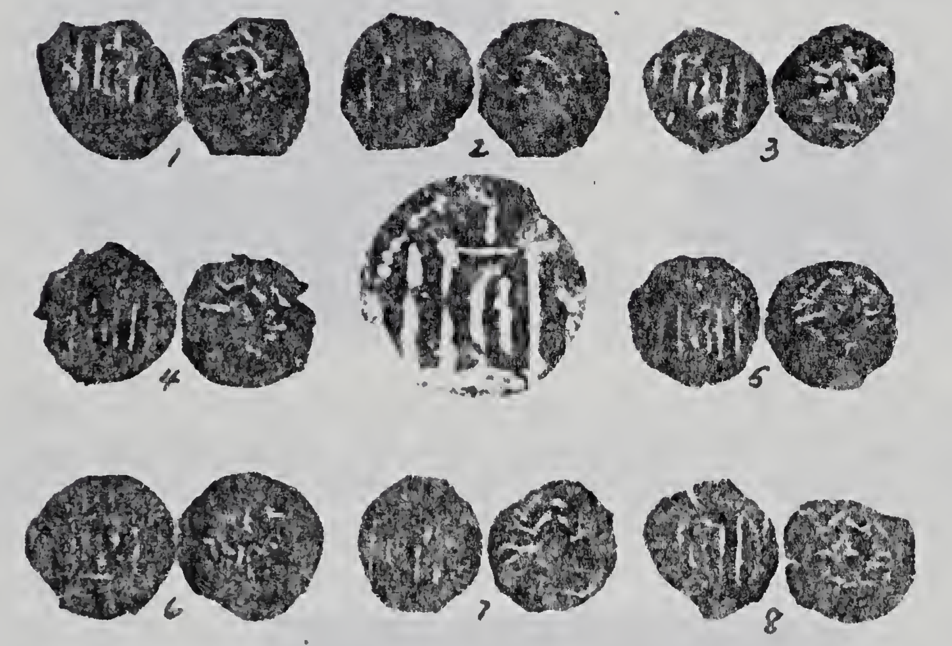

Figure 37. Photocopies of Kęstutis' coins (the central, enlarged).

Clearing away doubts of our elder numismatists, their uncertainties, at times, actual fog, we find sufficient proof that Lithuanian coins of type "K" are undoubtedly those of Kęstutis. Agreeing with us we find the illustrious scholar of Polish-Lithuanian historical coins, K. Stročonskis[22], the no less famous Hutten-Capski[23], V.G. Gartman[24] and other writers who were unaffected by ulterior motives. In 1938, I personally visited the numismatic Section of the Old Museum in Berlin. The Section's Curator did not budge by a hair from his belief that type "K" coins were of Kęstutis. He contended, without pride, that Germans were better equipped and had greater understanding in this field than anyone else. He stated that the Teutonic Order's relations with Kęstutis, and this Grand Duke's activity domestically had been scrutinized and published and unpublished analyses with true German thoroughness.

Tracing the very beginning of the history of these coins, we must consider well the factor of joint rule of Algirdas and Kęstutis (condominium) in Lithuania, and all its respects. Algirdas resolutely directed his pečat' coins to the Slavic sections of the Grand Duchy. We cannot imagine at the same time they would have forgotten the purely Lithuanian lands inhabited by the Highlanders, the Lowlanders, and the Sudavians where Kęstutis reigned. Algirdas occupied the throne in Vilnius, and concentrated almost all his attention to the Lithuanian east.[25] In Lithuania proper, Kęstutis reigned from his castle in Trakai. Both brothers, as we know, reigned independently in their own domain. "In that diarchy, while Algirdas resided in Vilnius, Trakai was the real capital of Kęstutis. And the degree with which these two headquarters of Vilnius and Trakai cooperated determined the entire political life of that era," says Prof. Dr. Z. Ivinskis.[26] It is fitting to add that the entire economic life of the entire state was similarly affected. At that time, when Algirdas was the Grand Duke, the Teutonic Knights held Kęstutis to be the Hertzog, which is to say--a very independent Duke.[27] As the annals of the Order mention, Algirdas would receive visiting leaders of the Teutonic Knights in Vilnius, while Kęstutis would do the same in Trakai. Justas though they were two seperate rulers. Even after the death of Algirdas, this relationship between Vilnius andTrakai was officially confirmed. On September 29, 1379, a cessation of hostilities for 10 years was concluded between Lithuania and the Order, which was signed on the part of Lithuania by the heir of Algirdas in Vilnius, Jogailą, and by Kęstutis, the "leader" in Trakai.[28] The signature of Jogailą alone would not have sufficed, though he was legally the Grand Duke of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

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[22] Op. Cit. (išn. 20) and "Dawne monety polskie..." III, 50

[23] "Catalogur.." V., Index, 1913, LXVII.

[24] "Polskije i litovskije starynnyje monety," page 10. O Wandalin Szukiewicz ("Kurhany kamienne," Swiatovid IV, 1902) type "K" coins he not only describes as those of Kęstutis, but also gives their international name: "denars." It was so that in addition to "small change" they were named.

[25] The same is emphasized by M. Bobrzynski ("Dzieje Polski..." page 230.).

[26] The castle on the Island in the Lake of Trskai, Galvė" (V.D. Kult. Muz. Annual I, page 96).

The problem of issuance of the very first coins was of immense significence in those days. It was novel, complicated, and most important. It affected an unusually sensitive field in the governmental life of Lithuania. And since that government was not integral, but an amalgam of two disparate parts, in organizing a monetary reform, proper attention must be given to the interests of one and the other peoples, their cultural differentiation, their religion and their language. Neither Algirdas nor Kęstutis alone could have solved these problems. They must be discussed and decided by both rulers of greater Lithuania. Thus, in our opinion, Algirdas' pečat and Kęstutis' coins had to be presented in circulation at about the same time. If a year or two separated thei appearance, it would have to be for technical reasons only.

Algirdas, as the official ruler of the entire government, placed upon his coins the universal symbol of Lithuania's power and rule: the spear (more specifically, the spear's head), which had been known and understood by the Slavs. Kęstutis, as ruler of the Lithuanian section of the Grand Duchy, resorted to his father's instituted sign: the Columns of Gediminas, which we also know as the Mast Portals. Within that symbol there is struck the letter "K", which recounts to us two essential particulars: 1) The symbol itself is not Kęstutis' own, as certain writers in the past would have concluded; 2) Kęstutis' coins were projected simultaneously with those of Algirdas, and belonged to the same period. If the Mast Portals had been Kęstutis' own symbol, there would have been no necessity to place his initial upon his coins, justas it was unnecessary for Algirdas to place his initial upon his coins.

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[27] Ibid. page 141. At times, Kęstutis was directly titled, "King of Lithuania" in western chronicles and annuals (for example, in the account of the Teutonic Knights of his capture and his escape from them, See "Our Past," I, 64).

[28] A. Šapoka, Lithuanian History, page 96.

Coming from the supreme ruler, the Slavs automatically understood the word pečat. So, Kęstutis could not avoid employing his "K", because this symbol had been used earlier by someone else, and thus his coins could have been misinterpreted as those of an earlier ruler of Lithuania and deceased Duke [i.e Gediminas, whose Columns symbol was on them] , or another series of Algirdas' coins. We will see later that the Mast Portals had been introduced by Gediminas, so without the "K" and with the Portals alone, Kęstutis' coins really could have been confused with Gediminas' name and times, while in reality they were projected, struck and issued with one considered gesture and simultaneously with Algirdas' coins.

One of the most perplexing problems facing students of ancient Lithuanian coins was: how did the Vytis find a place on Kęstutis' coins? See, some say thay found some seals of this Grand Duke, upon which there was no such image, so according to them, there should not be any on the coins...What then about the Columns of Gediminas which were not found on Kęstutis' seals, but are struck on his coins? What queer misgivings. In Egypt, among the American Indians, and in ancient Lithuania, arrow and spear edges could be found harder than wood! The owl appeared on Athenian drachmas (2nd century B.D.). On the coins of Nice (13th century). St. George is shown afoot. The golden "florin" of Florence pictured John the Baptist. On the half-groshes of Sigismund the Elder there suddenly appeared the year of emission, which until then had not been seen on coins. But as concerns Kęstutis---nothing "could happen" on its own! (sic)...If Kęstutis did utilize a pedestrian type of seal (sigillum pedestria), that still does not mean he could not have ordered a mounted figure to be engrave on his coins. Why, he lived half his life in the saddle. The steed, charmingly trolled in Lithuanian folk song much before Kęstutis, was his most faithful carrier on all his numerous expeditions. Where we do not recognize a static state anywhere, there is no foundation for positing one to Kęstutis' activity. How a ruler accomplishes his desires, how he changes what he wishes, we view Vytautas as a good example: 1354-85, his seal carried the Rider in the center, while on the later seal (the majestic one) he is seated on a throne, let us say, become pedestrian.

To whom can this question be of concern---why did Vytautas become pedestrian? He did what he desired. And that applies not only to Vytautas, but to Kęstutis and other rulers of those days of absolutism. Their will dictated the law and the spring of all novelty. Not to look too far, no one saw the picture of a horse on Polish money prior to the 11th century, until he was "found" on the coins of Boleslov IV. Does anyone still rack their brains about how and whence he came there and settled? The ruler ordered it--and it was done.

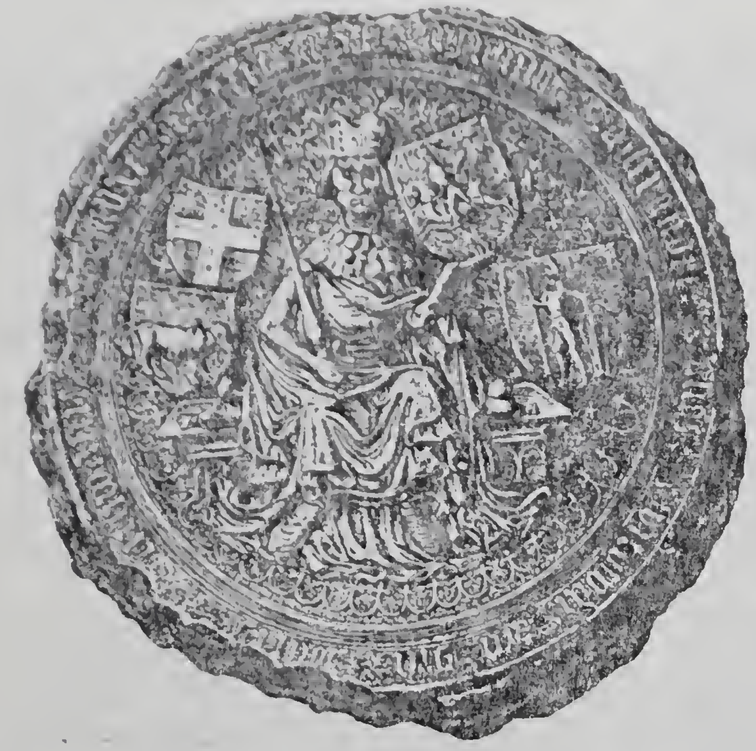

Figure 36. The seal of Vytautas the Great, in which the ruler is pictured not riding, but seated on a throne. At left, we can see a [to our right] rider on a shield held in Vytautas' hand which, clearly, does not represent Vytautas himself, but undoubtedly his father Kęstutis, who promulgated in this manner for the first time in Lithuania this figure on his coins.

[So Kęstutis was the first to use the Vytis symbol on Lithuanian coins. Actually, the symbol of Vytis (the Knight/Rider) is used also on the poured silver sticks "kapos" (see Pg. 70 figure 23 No. 7)].

We affirm without doubt that a similar situation applies to the incident of our Kęstutis' rider.

The average weight of Kęstutis' coins was about 0.5 gr. Their silver content, about 0.500. In one coin there was about 0.250 gr. of pure silver. The pečat coin of Algirdas had to contain almost a gram of precious metal. These facts encourage the scholars to believe that in issuing their modern currency, Algirdas and Kęstutis planned that 1 pečat would equal 4 of the "K" coins. Actually, the consistency of these coins' relationship has not been sufficiently probed. The examples found with reference to their metallic content (as with the weights) vary from one side to the other. But that is understandable, in those days it was not easy to overcome all technical difficulties. As a practical matter, however, the users of both monies did not concern themselves with "trifles." It was most important that in the Grand Dukedom there appeared finally their own, clear, uniformly understood coins, and the public could function normally, not concerning themselves with their real worth (unless some accomplished specialists would have desired accuracy here, but how many of that type were there?) [Below, Vytautas the Great defeats the Teutonic Knights in the fammous Battle of Tannenberg, 1410 (Žalgiris)]

It happened similarly with the "K" coins relationship with the Prague groshes. Since Kęstutis' coins were essentially intended for use in native Lithuania (Lituania Propria), wherein Prague groshes had already become well-known, Kęstutis must have reckoned with these international pieces. Comparing weights and chemical factors, it becomes evident that 10 of Kęstutis' coins constituted about the same real value as that of 1 grosh. (We refer not to the very first groshes, but to those of John or Karl, then widely circulated in Lithuania and better known). Really, the Prague grosh of that era weighed about 3 grams, and the silver in it was about 2.58 grams. We find very close to that of silver in 10 o Kęstutis' coins (0.250 X 10 = 2.50 gr.). To signify this relationship with the Czech groshes, Kęstutis placed on his coins the Roman numeral "X," of which we have already spoken. So, the character "x" on the "K" type coins was intended to show that one of those coins was a tenth of a Prague grosh, and ten of them equalled 1 grosh. Why Kęstutis did not mark all his coins so must remain an eternal mystery. We can only presume that the relationship between the grosh and the "K" coins became well enough known without specific notation.

Kęstutis' coins were struck in Trakai . Fedorov speaks of this. In those days, production of coins was instituted exclusively in the ruler's vicinity, in their manors, under their close scrutiny. Trakai was the permanent residence of Kęstutis for several decades without interruption. And it was a safe abode, because the first time the Teutonic Knights, encased in armour from head to foot, approached Trakai was 140 years after the beginning of warfare in west Lithuania. (We refer to the seige of the castle at Old Trakai about 1375).

The old and mighty castle of Trakai was the largest and most important political and military center of Lithuania long before Kęstutis. Even foreign authors seem to think that the history of Trakai is a large part of the history of Lithuania Propria in the 14th and 15th centuries.[29] Travellers visiting Trakai in the 15th century saw many foreigners there, among them Jews and Germans. They gathered there from all points, finding peaceful existence and aubsistence in the secure shelter of Gediminas and Kęstutis. The more perceptive tradesmen frequently were fugitives from areas conquered by the Teutonic Knights. According to Dr. Ivinskis, Lithuania found it necessary to hire craftsmen from Prussia (op. cit), but from the latter half of the 14th century, specialists from purely German territory became numerous in Lithuania. Among those immigrants, of course, were Kęstutis' minters . The Gothic style "K" on his coins clearly proves that those coins were etched by products of German schools, who came to Trakai and offered their services to Kęstutis in return for asylum and patronage. And if Algirdas' pečat would have been struck at Trakai, as Fedorov assumes, then those coins would have borne some traces of the west. But there are none. So, only Kęstutis' coins were struck in Trakai, and Kęstutis struck only his own, and by no means all of the Algirdas-Kęstutis coins. At the same time, it becomes repeated clearer to us that it was not Kaunas which was the dominant center of the western Grand Duchy, but Trakai, Kęstutis' permanent seat, around which all business affecting this part of Lithuania centered, "wherein all the Grand Duke's fortune and all his trappings of glory were safe guarded," as is written in the Gniezno Chronicle.

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[29] See M. Balinski and T. Lipinski's, both Poles, comments ("Starozytne Polska," IV, 1865, page 241.).

Lithuanians called Kęstutis' coins "small change". The White Russians named them "peniazi" (just as Algirdas' pečat and other coins of medieval Lithuania); the Poles, "pieniažki." Merchants acquainted with the names of all types of money, attached to Kęstutis' "small change" the tenth part of the Prague grosh, the international term, "denar."

d) The Double-Denars of Vytautas, Struck in Lutsk.

After the tragic events of 1382 in Lithuania, Vytautas found himself in N. Marienburg, with the Teutonic Knights. Those intimates of the deceased Kęstutis and supporters of the fleeing Vytautas, who remained free, alienated by Jogailą's excesses and avoiding oppression, excaped in groups to Vytautas. Jogailą was frightened. In addition to the persistent danger from the east, and domestic unrest, a gworing peril to his reclaimed Grand Duchy and to himself began to threaten from the Prussians. He realized what could be done by Vytautas' strategy taken together with the Order's sword. So, without further delay, Jogailą notified Vytautas that he wished to establish peace with his cousin, and offered to return to him his homeland--the land Kęstutis ruled. But for the time being, without Trakai because there now resided his most loyal brother and ally, Skirgaila, until he is located elsewhere, would Vytautas be content with Gardinas, Brasta, and Lutsk...

So long as it was back to his Fatherland! The son of Kęstutis has no place with the perennial enemies of Lithuania. Keeping his future plans secret, Vytautas accepted Jogailą's offer. In 1384, having burned Marienburg, he withdrew with his suppoerters to Lithuania. He stopped in Gardinas for a while, but soon it became too crowded.[30] In addition, the Teutonic Order was too close. They maneuvered an approach to the Nemunas river. Brasta was a safer haven, but it reminded Vytautas of the blood of his friends, shed by followers of Jogailą after the death of Kęstutis, as they gathered here for safety. The best alternate choice was Lutsk. There Vytautas soon settled with his followers, who daily grew in numbers from Trakai, Vilnius, the Samogitia region, and elsewhere. It was far away from the "eyes and ears" of Jogailą, from Vilnius. The spacious castle of Lutsk, built and decorated in the days of Ruirick, became a fitting nest for the Eagle whose most important task now was to organize most secretly a fateful blow to Jogailą and ragain all his rights.

In those times, Lutsk was truly a very important seat in the realm of the Grand Duchy. Through it passed lively communicatsions with Poland, as well as with Czechiz and other middle European nations. There were well-traveled roads criss-crossing to and from Lithuania. As soon of Vytautas settled in Lutsk, many more partisans of Kęstutis and of Vytautas himself, his admireres, co-workers and neighbors from Trakai, not just eminent boyars, but prosperous merchants, craftsmen and even servatns, all congregated around him. And everyone brought along with him whatever of value, or necessity he had. And of course, his wealthier associates brought with them their resources. And Vosylius, son of Dmitri, the Grand Duke of Moscow, became engaged to the future Duchess of Moscow, Vytautas' daughter Sofia.

As Vytautas, returning in 1384 from the Order, had stopped off in Gardinas, we must assume that, together with others from Trakai, there came to him the minters, or coiners. They were not needed by Skirgaila in Trakai, since he did not strike any coins there. Whereas Vytautas, in their eyes the matured and legal heir of Kęstutis, promised them again security in their chosen profession, and anyone who knew Vytautas could not think otherwise. And their reasoning was true. Preparing to fight for his entire Fatherland, and striving to sit on Gediminas' throne, Vytautas must prepare one of the most vital props of his program: money. We can imagine how graciously he received the Trakian minters, since in the circumstances in which he now found himself, his best plan was to strike for Lithuanians and White Russians coins of the Kęstutis type already known to them and circulating for over 20 years, having already overcome all the hazards facing new coins in wide spheres of society. In like manner, similar situations were solved elsewhere, even in ancient eras. For example, Philip II (of Macedon) whose coins were repeated not only by his son, the famous Alexander, but by Phillip III and even further heirs.

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[30] The castle of Gardinas, later very prominent, had not yet been built. "It was most probably constructed after Vytautas had become the Grand Duke of Lithuania," notes Dr. Z. Ivinskis (V.D. Kult. Muz. Annual, I, 167). Information from other sources indicated the castle was completed in 1398. [Gardinas is located in southern Lithuania on the Nemunas river.]

That Vytautas has struck coins in Lutsk, there is no doubt. This question, though not directly, appears with Dr. Gumowski. The Russian Fedorov also acknowledges it.[31] In the works of I. Danilaviczi (Skarbiec Dyplomatow, I, 273) is mentioned the privilege given Jews in Lutsk by Vytautas in 1388, where mention is made, among other things, of the Grand Duke's currency, of counterfeits of coins, and to whom was given the task of investigating such Jewish frauds. This is one of the most typical proofs, that Vytautas conducted affairs in Lutsk in a truly regal manner, and issued his own coins. And the unusual similarity of the Lutsk coins to Kęstutis' "small change," almost the same size, weight, and assay confirms to the scholar that the Trakai minters who came to Vytautas, brought with them not only knowledge and experience, but also, if not all, at least a part of the tools which they utilized working for Kęstutis.

It is impossible to say definitely in which years the first strikings of the mint presses were sounded in Lutsk. We can only guess that the minters already present, began their task soon after Vytautas settled in Lutsk. The very close resemblence of the Lutsk coins' Vytis to the Vytis of Vytautas' seal of 1385 (See page 133, figure 36) indicate that both the product on the seal, and the described coins could have been from the same hands. And from this, the conclusion seems to follow that the Lutsk coins could have appeared about 1385. Their issuance broke off in 1389, After the unsuccessful atack upon Vilnius, Vytautas withdrew for the second time to the Teutonic Knights.

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[31] Alas, they both select different coins for Lutsk, but that is not important here. Much more important is the fact that Vytautas struck coins while resinding at Lutsk.

39.

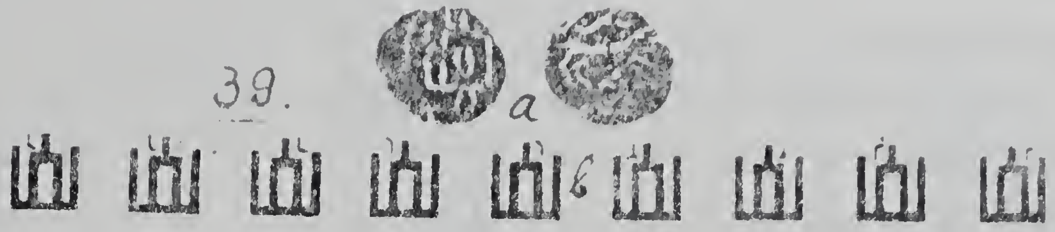

Figure 39. a) a Lutsk coin of Vytautas. b) the letter "L" changes its position and appearance in this fashion. It is placed near the top short mast of the Mast Portals.

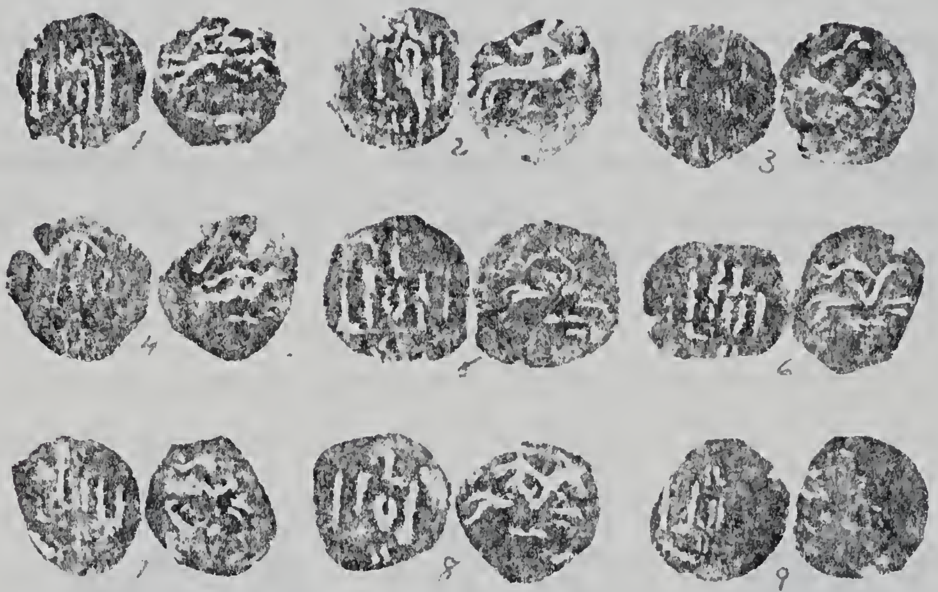

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Figure 40. The coins of Vytautas, struck at Lutsk, photographed from new findings. Enlarged picture, figure 41 b.

The general likenesses, which we have seen in Kęstutis' "small change," remain the same on the Lutsk coins. On one side are the Columns of Gediminas, on the other, the rider. But in place of the letter "K", Vytautas' initial "V"

[32]appears. To designate the mint's location, we find the letter "L" above the Columns of Gediminas. How the etching of that letter was accomplished by the minters, capital or small it seems to us it could have meant only Lutsk. No other purpose is apparant. It was placed indiscriminately, one one side or the other of the Cólumns, atop the small mast. At times, in proper position, at times opposite or even upside down (See figure 39). It gives the impression of haste, and the other characters leave the same impression.

These examples are taken from clearer pictures of Karazia' described and photographed items from the hoards of Aluona Škerlis and Krūminiai. Comparing these pictures with the sketches done earlier of the same coins we can see with no problems how difficult it was for the early pioneers in Lithuanian numismatics to orient themselves. The oldest sketches sorely misled those writers and their readers, who failed to view the coins themsleves. So it should be no surprise that "scholarly conclusions" of the early numismatists were inaccurate, often not understood by themselves, and far from expressing the truth. Figure 41 gives pictures which we believe, will convince the reader

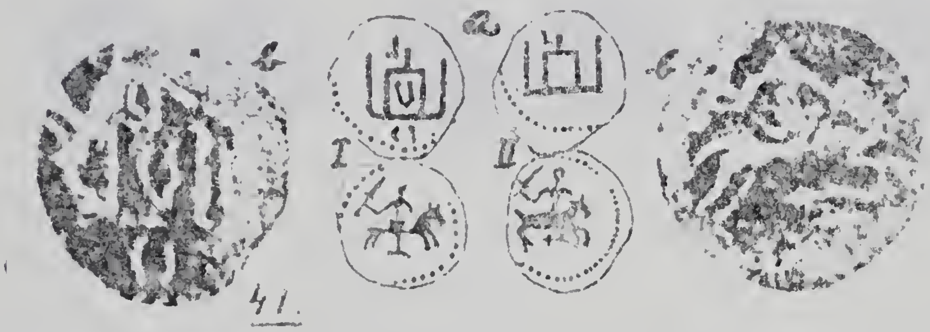

Figure 41. a) poorly reproduced Lutsk coins of Vytautas.
b) Enlarged photographs of the actual coins.

[Note: this is very important to understand, because often in numismatic publications these hand-drawn illustrations will appear. Vytuatas' coins of this type MUST have the letter V in the center, and MUST have the two vertical lines at the bottom, as well as, of course, the letter "L".]

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[32] While he resided with the Order, prior to the Lutsk episode, Vytautas was baptized, taking the name of Vygandas. How did he accept the faith--does not concern us here. However, the letter "V" appearing on his coins could as well signify "Vygandas." And Vygandas, is the same person as Vytautas. [Vytautas also is known in foreign writings as Witold, and Vitoldas, etc.]

that only photographs are error free. That we can completely accept them. That only they give an absolutely clear view of the object of study.

As we have seen, drawings (or sketches) of the same coins, and their authentic photographs render almost entirely differing pictures. And what is worse, in some places (Figure 41a/II) not all details are brought out in the hand-drawn sketches, the letter "V" is missing from the Columns; also missing are the two vertical lines, which are visible at the bottom of the actual coins.

In seperating Vytautas' Lutsk' coins from those of Kęstutis at Trakai, we have already described their appearance and known measurable data. There remains only the need to consider the nominal worth of the Lutsk coins, and to describe other qualities having primary significance in numismatics. During the era these coins were struck (that is, 1385-1389 , when Vytautas had to flee from Lithuania for the second time), the Prague grosh had already found its place in Lithuania almost as a native. However, its weight and silver content had significantly declined from the time Kęstutis' coins had first appeared. The inferior Prague coins increased in circulation--inferior coins are always the "faster". It seems that Vytautas notice the depreciation of the Prague grosh in Lutsk. He had opportunity to observe the groshes of Vaclov IV, which were just about one half the size of the earlier ones, and therefore ran out of circulation the larger coins. Some of Vaclov IV groshes found in Lithuania together with those of Vytautas, according to the statistics of Karazia, weighed on the average about 2.78 gr. Their average silver content, just about 0.6 (some even poorer were found, having fallen to 0.500). So, one of those groshes would contain only about 1.70 gr. of pure metal. That is to say that the Prague Grosh, which were valued by Kęstutis equal to 10 of this "small change" [denars], now, were not worth that by far, as did those of John or Karl, and on course, even less than the coins of Vaclov II.

Being unable to strike coins smaller than those of Kęstutis, for technical reasons, Vytautas found another method to continue with the decimal system. He maneuvered into the category of nominal value for his coins, which weighed the same and were composed of the same silver content as those of Trakai, consciously edging away from the prevailing view of those days that a coin must be worth as much as the value of the metal used to produce it. Of course, that view was questionable. There was a single standard for comparison purposes, but all nations struck their coins as though their eyes were closed. However, Vytautas did not become involved in such chaos. He conducted himself honorable. He gave his "small change" a double nominal value and expressed this in a clearly visible manner upon his coins, instructing his minters to inscribe special marks. Among the findings of these coins, below the Mast Portals [Columns of Gediminas] ,everyone can note two curved figures. They are placed there to indicate the numeral "two" [2]. That "two" meant that each Lutsk coin of Vytautas in circulation would replace as many as two of Kęstutis' coins and if the exchange involved the devalued Prague grosh, five would suffice.[33]

How this novelty affected the grosh and Kęstutis' "small change", we cannot say, but the decimal system, introduced by his father, Vytautas did not disturb. One of his coined pieces meant two of the older denars, or "small change." Five made up 10 denars, or the nominal value of the inferior Prague grosh. As in the past, 10 of Kęstutis' denars constituted the former grosh of higher intrinsic value.

So, finally, we have the explanation of the two characters on the bottom of the Columns of Gediminas, which presented such a deep mystery to the expounders of the first Lutsk coins of Vytautas. Let us examine those signs carefully (Figures #3, 7, 9; Figure 41b; Figure 42a; they are the clearest). Who could argue even in fun, that those characters would at some time have constituted a letter, its part, or some type of "pagan religious symbol?" So, Vytautas' minters unable to perform clearly their assigned task, gave our early and less experienced numismatists a headache for an entire century. Sigismund August and the later Lithuanian "doublet" (or a two denar coin) had the very same marks "Two" (II), but they were straight, and raised no doubts for anyone. But they were done after nearly 200 years---Etched in the very dies by more accomplished experts, by more disciplined artists. While Vytautas' minters, as Karazija well noted, had to cut their "two" with a special mallet ("punch") , after the entire coin had dropped out. It depended on how they succeeded in cutting or incising that detail, how they coul place the punch on the coin and strike it from above, This determined the shap of the marks and their most unusual variaties found in the coins. But it is clear: they mean "2, two" everywhere, though they are not too similar to the known Roman figures.

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[33] There is some suspicion that Vytautas at Lutsk could have increased his money supply by impressing the "II" on Kęstutis' coins coming into his possession, but clear proof of that allegation has not yet surfaced.

The decimal system, instituted by Kęstutis, and retained by Vytautas and Jogailą, remained in Lithuania in the days of their own groshes, even until the end of the Grand Duchy's money system. For example, documents from the 17th century contain special explanations that 1 grosh is made up of ten "small change," [denars] and those must be "white," that is, silver, and not copper, which caused much confusion in the days of John Casimier (Historical Sources, I, page 187, and elsewhere).

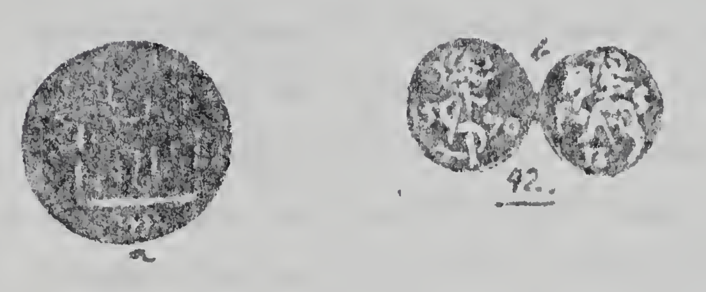

Figure 42. a) The obverse side of Vytautas' Lutsk coins (enlarged); b) the "doublet" of Sigismund August 1570 coin. On both coins clearly to be seen are the characters "II," and they mean the same: "two."

We must add that the coins Vytautas struck at Lutsk were "necessity money," peculiarily his own. He could not have had too much silver. Kęstutis' minters, and perhaps even the students turned out by them, were "green" at their art. All circumstances indicate that every task was hurried. We can guess that Vytautas' activity in Lutsk was observed covertly by Jogailą's spies. Vytautas sought to prepare quickly for a final occupation of his Fatherland :too bad! This time, he overreached himself. His transition from the real value of his coins to nominalism, especially without appropriate changes in law, remind us of the actions of a desperate, cornered individual. Even though the Prague grosh had deteriorated, it sill contained about 1.700 grams of silver. Whereas in 5 of Vytautas' coins there were only 1.250 grams of pure silver (in 1 specimen found, about 0.250 grms.). Normally, unhurriedly, Vytautas could better have conformed his coins to the grosh. But observing it from the other side, the discussed "reform" shows us Vytautas as an exeptionally talented man, able to extricate himself from any situation.

And these Lithuanian coins were first of all "small change." Whoever calls them "two denars" is also correct, since they were 2-denar coins according to the old international term. Those numismatists of our day violate history who affix to Lithuanian medieval coins names fashioned much later and entirely foreign to them. One of those "baptismal fathers" [i.e. the late Dr. Alexander M. Račkus. See The Numismatist Vol. 43, 1930 "The Origin of Kopeck;" also "The Origin of Rubel" Vol 47, 1934 of that same prestigious publication, for what Karys calls the "idiocities" of Dr. Račkus' articles] has baptized a 2-denar of Vytautas as "kopek." (to him, Algirdas' Pečat coins were also "kopeks."). That, of course, is pure fantasy. In the days of Vytautas' Lutsk "monies," (even worse, Algirdas' pečat), Russian "kopejka" were not even in the works, so to tie in that name to the much older Lithuanian coins is for that reason alone improper. The Russian coin "kopejka" and its designation began among Russians in the days of John IV (1533-1584), over 170 years after the appearance of the first Lithuanian coins (and also the "pečat"). And it was over 150 years after the striking of Vytautas' Lutsk coins, and they matured and became popular--much later.[34]

The inventive "baptiser" of our ancient coins finally turned away from "kapeika" himself. Well, better later than never. Now, the Vytautas' coins referred to here, and of course, the similar "small change" of Kęstutis are to him "silver skatics" (only the pečat coin has not yet received his further attention). Here again, he has shot way above the target, since neither Kęstutis' "small change" nor Vytautas' 2-denars were even called "skatics," since the word "skatikas" was unknown to medieval Lithuania. Any attempt to compare modern Russian specifically copper coins, the"1/2 kopeck" coins (which by chance, centuries later, were termed "skatic") with the old silver coins of Vytautas and Kęstutis is mere diletantism. [*]

Old coins had their names. As with everything, it is their own. It is unseemly to change them. It this possibly a forced tendency to renew "Lithuanianism?" They labor in vain. The word "skatic" is neither more Lithuanian than "small change" or "denar," nor does it fit better. We will leave it to the linguists to discover through which byways this word came into our language. It will satisfy us to know that the etimological roots of this temporary visitor go back not to our past, but to entirely strange archaic "money" for cattle (German "skatts," Old Saxon "skat." Norman "scatt." From there, by some transition, to "skot" and "skotil") which Lithuanians, as far as known, have never used. At the timemetal coinage began to find acceptance in Europe, the Germans derived "skoter" from "skatts" or "stak." The Slavs adopted "skot" and "skotik." The Poles used "szkojec", which at first meant a certain amount of silver, equal to the value of an ox. It was later diverted to a smaller unit. Both "skoter" and "szkojec" were only reckoning standards. In case of necessity, they could be designated as the price of various articles. However, they were never issued as specific coins. So the attempt to invest the word "skatick" with a monetary connotation is unfortunate, since it was never a coin. We know only of the 1/2 and 1/4 "skoter" among German coins, but they also had their own names, "half-skoter," and a "quarter."

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[34] After known reforms, begun in 1535, the new "dengas" of Moscow with the rider, holding in his hand the spear (in Russian "kopjo,") was named "kopejnyje." The singular was "kopejnik." Until the 17th century, it was often called the "Novgordka." Finally it settled to "Kopejka", the earlist copper "kopejka" was issued in Russia by order of Peter I,in 1704. A hundred "kopejkas" made up the modern Russianmonetary system, with its basic unit of "ruble." During the occupation by Czarist Russia (19th and early 20th centuries), the "kopejkas" circulating in Lithuania were termed by the people as "kapeikas." Thus, what kind of connection could the "kapeika" have with Vytautas', and even worse---with Algirdas' coins?

[*] A lengthy critic of Dr. Račkus' fantasies and its effect upon Lithuanian numismatics was published in Karys 1970 Numizmatika book, in a letter to the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture in Chicago,which acquired Dr. Račkus' collection. Karys points out the many errors and contradictions which Dr. Račkus propagated, even in prestigious numismatic journals, which should have knownbetter. For an english translation of this entire critic, see the June 1980 (Vol III, No. 1) issue of The Knight (of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association).

So let us say that the word "skatic" has no place in the Lithuanian historical financial dictionary. And our philogists have stated that this "orphan"'s root has never had any ties with Baltic tongues, so also it has had no ties with the original Lithuanian language, and no connection with the monies of any locality in our country.

c) The Vilnius coins of Jogailą

Having inherited Algirdas' position in Vilnius (1377), Jogailą had to struggle long for his rights as Grand Duke of Lithuania in that large country. His first adversaries were of his own family. His elder brothers voiced their pretensions, based upon their seniority, to their father's inheritance. The forceful uncle Kęstutis, ever viligent guardian of Lithuania, followed his steps from Trakai at a distance with good will, so long as this nephew exhibited no defiance, but in 1381, chastized him greviously: took away from him the throne in Vilnius and declared himself to be the Grand Duke. However, with the death of Kęstutis in 1382,his cousin Vytautas, matured with great talents, rose up against Jogailą. So, Jogailą found his hands full of very sensitive political problems, hampering him from addressing hi attention to the less sensitive matters of government.

Faced with all these weighty issues at the start of his reign, Jogailą did not undertake the issuance of new coins. So far as our present data shows, he contented himself with restrikes of the coins issued by Algirdas. Jogailą was a pagan, as his father had been. His actual government reached only the eastern part of the Grand Duchy. So Algirdas' practice of issuing for circulation the wordless Russian inscribed "pečat" coins in the territory inhabited by Slavs, sufficed for the future.

That Jogailą did strike Russian coins, even Dr. Gumowski confirms. But his reasoning processes are unclear. In his opinion, Jogailą struck "Russian half-groshes" in the period 1396-1414 at Lvov.[35] But that writer fails to show what these half-groshes looked like.[36] But it seems that he speaks of those same "pečat" coins of Algirdas, which likewise were known as "half-groshes," and of course, following the inscription, were quite Russian.[37] In that period, Vytautas governed the entire Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and struck its money, having begun to call himself the Grand Duke of Lithuania back in 1395, and permitted no one to interfere in his affairs. Jogailą governed in Poland. If he had been able to flaut any of his issue coins within the lands governed by Vytautas, he would have them struck in Cracow, where he had a substantial coin mint. Why is Lvov mentioned here? Who would believe that Jogailą would have founded a new mint in such a swampy hole, far from the capital of Poland? In the 14th century, very few were acquainted with the location of Lvov, far away over swamps and rivers, reached easier by birds...

History is filled with facts and fiction as to how Vytautas pushed out of his way all types of obstructionists to his independent rule. By 1395 he had just about cleaned out all insubordinate Dukes in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, replacing them with faithful retainers. Jogailą long opposed him, but his efforts in Lithuania accomplished no good, so in the Vilnius-Rodomas Agreement of 1401, he recognized his stubborn cousin Vytautas as Grand Duke of Lithuania. From all this it follows that during 1396 to 1414, Jogailą neither could strike "Russian half-groshes" for Lithuania, nor did he.

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[35] "Numismat. Litewska," page 35.

[36] "Monety Polskie," In this volume, coins of the time of Jogailą-Hedwiga are pictured, together with an undoubted "pečat" of Algirdas (Schedule IV 52).

[37] "Numismat. Lit", page 45.

The latest research (seeFedorov's "Klassifikacija") shows the "pečat" coins were struck in the period 1360-82. Since Algirdas was no longer alive after 1377, and his seat in the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at Vilnius was taken by Jogailą, it was this latter who continued the issuance of these coins up to 1382. We say "continued" because these coins were initiated by Algirdas, at a time when Jogailą was a mere boy of 10 years.

We can understand the inclination of Polish writers to favor Jogailą in one way or another. We likewise feel the reason one of our "numismatists" would credit Vytautas with practically all of Lithuania's coins of the middle ages (including of course, the pečat type, according to him, the kopeck) [i.e. Dr. Račkus]. But that's too bad! Such signs of sympathy in scientific work harm more than help,and we must foreswear them. We will not exalt our beloved forebearers by showering them with unearned distinctions.

We cannot find the exact date on which Jogailą began to continue striking Algirdas' coins, but we may conclude that it happened shortly after Jogailą assumed the mitre of theGrand Duke. Since from the eath of his father until 1384, Jogailą issued no new coins, it is entirely possible that he was satisfied to repeat constantly, or just at times, the issuance of the pečat coins. Struggling to strengthen his position, money was undoubedly necessary to Jogailą. It seems that all the circumstances of the time compelled Jogailą to avail himself of the coin mint left by his father in Vilnius, and to strike those same coins which had already found acceptance in circulation.

In our discussion of Algirdas' coins, we mentioned that the pečat coin type, most of which are assembled in the National SSSR Museum, the Hermitage, are not of uniform size. Some are larger, others, smaller. That is, the type is the same, but there are two clearly different sizes. Where does this hitherto unnoticed fact lead us? There is no basis for assuming that both pečat sized coins were struck by Algirdas himself. The larger coins would have sufficed to introduce the new coin, just as the Czechs were satisfied to issue a single sized coin, as did Kęstutis, Moscow, and an entire series of rulers of other countries. On the other hand, the successful role of the Prague grosh in the eastern parts of Lithuania could have suggested to Jogailą the need for a smaller coin for the Slavs. We are led to believe that having issued sufficient coins of the original Algirdas issue, he ordered that Same Vilnius mint to strike smaller coins of the same type. It must be these same smaller coins of Jogailą of which Gumowski speaks, though not clearly. He was unable to harmonize their striking date and place with other historical events.

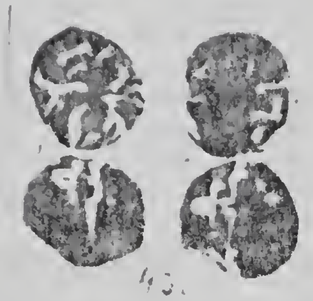

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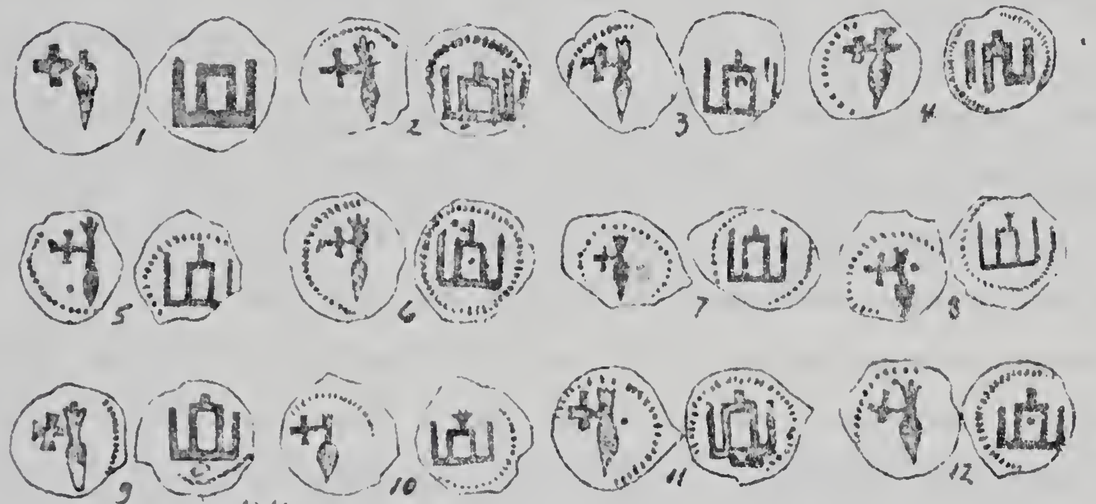
Figure 43. The small pečat type coins, attributable to Lith. Grand Duke Jogailą, and struck in Vilnius prior to 1384.

Atout 1384, new silver coins of Jogailą appeared in Vilnius. Their time is issuance coincides with Vytautas' first return from the Teutonic Knights, and the beginning of matchmaking of Jadwig and Jogailą.Both these latter facts had an undeniable impact upon the appearance and the visual aspects of these coins. First of all, his accord with Vytautas (whom he considered to be satisfied with the transfer of Lithuanian territory to him) rid him of his greatest political opponent, and Jogailą considered himself safe in his throne in Vilnius. On the other hand, having the



44

Figure 44. Characteristic examples of the Vilnius coins promulgated by Jogailą.

leading pretender to that throne, son of Kęstutis at his side, Jogailą was impelled to demonstrate publicly in all possible ways, that the ruler of the entire Grand Duchy of Lithuania was himself. And in those days, the issuance of his own coins for the entire land was one of the most vivid means of demonstrating that fact.

Those new coins portrayed on the obverse: the symbols utilized by Jogailą's father Algirdas (the spearhead and cross). On the reverse, the Columns of Gediminas, the symbol of grandfather Gediminas, which had found its place on Kęstutis' coins. All this showed that Jogailą directed these coins not just to any one province of the Lithuanian government, but to the entire Grand Duchy, including those lands assigned to Vytautas. The name of the ruler, as on the pečat coins, was not indicated by even one letter. That fact can be explained two ways. 1) Jogailą either followed his father's inherited tradition consciously, 2) or in this instanct, the minters left by Algirdas acted characteristically, being accustomed to the anonymity of the pečat coins.

Judging from the results of digs, one of these coins weighed about 0.33 gr. The average silver contend: 0.500. In this way, pure silver in one would have been about 0.165 grms. Then, 10 of Jogailą's coins would roughly equal 1 of the Prague groshes (Wenceslaus IV) at that time. It follows from this that the coins referred to would have been denars. But in the idiom of the people, they were generally known as "small change". (In Slavkc, "peniazi"). This term was used for all our earlist coins--those without any legends. In use, however, they were considered concretely, as a "lit" or "cent" is now.

◆

While discussing this "small change [pinigėlius]", we cannot ignore completely two "theories" which have become current, that is, 1) the Pole Gumowski, that these coins of Jogailą are the first and oldest Lithuanian coins without doubt (sic); and 2) a tyro-numismatist among Lithuanians [guess who again...] says that they are not Jogailą's, but Vytautas' and struck ---about 1372 in Gardinas. In the first "theory" we find this much truth, that the referred coins were initiated by Jogailą; but these were not the first coins of Lithuania, nor the very oldest, as we have demonstrated sufficiently in a previous section.

◆

In the second "theory" we find even less truth.[38] Vytautas did not yet live in Gardinas in 1372, but engaged in warfare with his father [Kęstutis] from Trakai, and in that very year fought in battle against Moscow for the independence of Tverve. Kęstutis sent him to Gardinas several years later; historical sources record him being there only after 1376.[39]

However, we shouldn't forget that Gardinas was part of the Trakai Duchy, therefore the most significant matters of state, not excluding the issuance of money in the Gardinas region, as in all the Ducny governed by Kęstutis, were in the hands of that Duchy's ruler, and not in the hands of some of the sub-regions' Dukes. All coins ordained for all regions governed by Kęstutis, as we have seen, were struck at Trakai.

According to Fedorov, the coins referred to here were struck continuously from 1384 until the beginning of the 14th century.[40] Gumowski places their appearance in 1387. However that might be, both dates by afar fail to reach 1372. Based upon compilations of the hoards found, these coins circulated mostly in central Lithuania, the Ukraine, and generally in the east. In Gardinas, both before and after 1372, the "small change" of Kęstutis', struck in Trakai, was to be found.

There is no Rider on these coins. Only symbols of Jogailą's grandfather Gediminas and his father Algirdas were used. Jogailą did not like Kęstutis, so he ignored the symbol originated by him; let us say, he did not want to spread his popularity.[41] But if Vytautas had struck these coins in Gardinas, would he have omitted the Rider, sponsored by his own father? While he was at Lutsk (after his father's death), Vytautas did not disown the Rider. Beginning with those Lutsk coins, he also used the Rider on his seal, on later coins and on his flag, which demonstrates that this famed son of Kęstutis never forgot his fathers' introduced symbol, but held it higher than any other symbol of his Lithuanian origin. In addition to this, the instant coins of Jogailą, even in the aspect of variance in weight, seem to be the newest of all old Lithuanian coins; and they were produced, as we have seen, by the hands of eastern rather than western minters, so it had to be in Vilnius, rather than in the range of Kęstutis' money (Gardinas).

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[38] In addition to this "theory," that same person has written in the Lithuanian press in the U.S., and even in the American press, of an entire list of queer incidents about the coins of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy, which novice numismatists must ignore at their peril. [Karys is speaking of you-know-who]

[39] Dr. J. Šliupas, "The Lithuanian Nation"...Plymouth, 1905, page 204.

[40] "Klassifikac litovskich slitkov i monet."

[41] Only after Vytautas repeated the Rider on his coins (at Lutsk) and on his seal, did Jogailą comprehend that this symbol was inevitably becoming a true identifying symbol of Lithuania. So, on his 1387 seal in Poland, he also mounted a steed as Grand Duke of Lithuania.

There are many Lithuanians who feel kindly towards Vytautas, rather than Jogailą, but we cannot alter history therefore. Looking at it from another angle, Jogailą is likewise our own, a member of a famous Lithuanian family, and was himself the ruler of Lithuania, so it is unjust, in fact, very mean, actually unworthy to "take away" any of the feats or triumphs to which he is entitled. [Many Lithuanians have a negative feeling towards Jogailą due to the fact that he went over to the Poles.]

There is quite some suspicion,(exclusive of subjective tendencies) which lead numismatic collectors (through morasses of their own fantasies) to form an opinion, that the Columns of Gediminas, or the Mast Portals used upon these coins, is a monopoly exclusively of the strain of Gediminas, following the Kęstutis lineage. This is a clearly erroneous view, as Prof. Jonynas puts it very well: "The entire family of ruling Grand Dukes, from the time of Gediminas, was of the same strain. Thus both Vytautas and Jogailą could use the Columns to signify their high lineage."[42] And they used them, as we have seen earlier, in the "small change" of Kęstutis, Vytuatas and Jogailą, and as we shall see of the later rulers of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, in their coins and seals afterwards.

The "small change" issued by Jogailą were struck in Vilnius in an unprecedented amount: in theeighteen hoards examined, there were found 5,000 coins. Their original abundance is proven not just by the hoards, but also in the clearly perceptible changes in stamps, the differing Columns of Gediminas, the varying spearheads, the unequal crosses, the uneven mass of dots and buds. Since Jogailą began striking these coins shortly before his departure to reign in Poland, and their striking, as Fedorov contends, continued into the beginning of the 15th century, the major part of them must be attributed to Jogailą's local representatives; Until 1392, to Skirgaila, and afterward, when he was supplanted by Vytautas.

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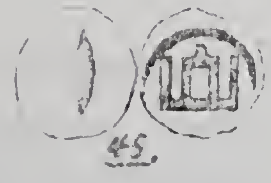
[42] See "The Rudder (Vairas) " #6, 1930, page 218.

Numismatists of former years have recorded seeing and picturing this type of "small change/money" without a cross at the side of the spearhead. Some have immediately held this as the sole proof that the striking of these coins had begun prior to the institution of Christianity in Lithuania. Dr. Gumowski, cognizant of the presence of the cross upon Christian and non-Christian seals and coins, finds this to be merely an error in Jogailą's earlier coins, which was soon corrected, and all other coins were struck with crosses. In this controversy with Gumowski, his "opponents" hold the spearhead without the cross to be "Vytautas' personal symbol." (However, whoever struck the coin placed upon it his own symbol...)



45.

Figure 45. Incorrectly sketched is this Vilnius coin of Jogailą; struck without the cross at the spearhead.

That those coins appeared even before Lithuania's baptism is clear without the evidence of that unfortunate coin. As everyone knows, the cross on coins has no connection with baptism. We also cannot readily stipulate an error by the minters. Reproducing two of the symbols on Algirdas' coins, they could not have overlooked one of them. It seems to us that here the early students of Jogailą's coins found a worn coin and sketched it. Let us just look closely at (figure 45) the picture. It can be clearly seen that the spearhead is not all there. Further, it does not occupy the coin's center, but somewhat to the right, as though leaving space for a cross, which actually was there inthe original (as in other coins of this type), but rubbed off. With it, a part of the spearhead likewise disappeared. In normal recoveries, that symbol was there in its entirety and is illustrated as such in both Algirdas' and Jogailą's coins. Damaged recoveries do not give a true picture, when they are studied and sketched from a limited number, not considering the entire field, as we have asserted somewhat earlier, when considering the Lutsk coins of Vytautas.[43]

We will see in the section devoted to Lithuania's national symbols that during the era of Independent Lithuania, there were added to the spearhead other "Vytautas' symbols," consituting something entirely different from those mentioned here. That is the end result of irresponsible breaches into an unfamiliar field. If Vytautas really had fancied the spearhed used by Algirdas, and had "appropriated" it, it would have passed through all his coins, seals and flags, and by those means would have reached us, as for instance did the Vytis. As we know, Vytautas did not toy with "personal symbols" at all. In his seals and his coins those symbols persist which his grandfather Gediminas and father Kęstutis used: the columns of Gediminas, and the Rider. These designs silvered the red flags of Vytautas (Lithuania's) army during the Battle of Žalgiris [Tannenberg], and the Rider is varied forms was elevated to the honor of the national emblem without any suspicion of "appropriation." That is to say, any "personal symbol" of Vytautas appearing on Jogailą's coins is the fruit of capricious thought, similar to others spauned by this immigrant[44] [Dr. Alexander M. Račkus] into America.

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[43] See page 144 (figure 41).

[44] For example, the ancient goths were "Gudonai, the closest relatives of Lithuanian," (sic); Theodoric's name was "Tautarikis," a gold bracelet found somewhere in Romania bearing an indistinct inscription was represented as "inscribed in Gudonian runes GUTANIOTHI GHAILAGI" and meant in Lithuanian GUDONAI--RIDE!IT IS A SHAME! While the bracelet was "an ancient era's "shiling", from the Lithuanian word "salinkis," meaning "bent"....He even knows of "Mindaugas' seal with an inscription in runic characters," though the Vytis in that seal seems very close to the 17th century Knight. Etc, etc... [In addition to refering to Račkus' numismatic errors found in various articles, Karys here also refers to Račkus' book, The Goths, published in the 1920's, in which Dr. Račkus tried to prove that the Lithuanians were related by blood to the Gothic people.]

3. COINS OF VYTAUTAS THE GREAT 1392-1430

Returning from exile into his Fatherland for the last time, Vytautas ascended the throne in Vilnius in 1392, as legal deputy in Lithuania of Jogailą. Jogailą forced this promise upon Vytautas, that the latter, would always acknowledge Jogailą as the supreme ruler of the Grand Duchy. However, this promise was soon set aside. Vytautas began governing the land pursuant to his own plans, as if that forced promise had never been made. He was the son of Kęstutis. Kęstutis reigned as Grand Duke of Lithuania in the period 1381-82. Who should more properly inherit that exalted position, when cousin Jogailą in fact left it and never intended to return from Poland? So, after completing his arrangements and fortifying himself in his position, in 1395 Vytautas assumed the title of Grand Duke of Lithuania.

During the reign of Jogailą-Skirgaila, the reins of government in the Grand Duchy had been loosened considerably. Some of the sectional Dukes felt autonomous and began to govern as they saw fit. The elder brothers of Jogailą were discontented with Jogailą's rule. And so much the more with Skirgaila's rule. After several years of dallying with these men, Vytautas finally achieved control over the immense Lithuanian territory which Algirdas had established. Those dukes who had relaxed their obedience to Vilnius were either compelled to restate their allegiance, or to be dismissed. Their replacements were men loyal to Vytautas. The larger dukedoms within the boundaries of the Lithuanian state were broken up, and their income and armies were acquired by Vytautas. He thus quickly strengthened his position and wealth. To quiet the Teutonic Knights, until the moment of decision came, Vytautas threw them a bone at Salynas (where a non-aggression treaty was signed in 1398).

Actually, during a banquet occurring after the Salynas Treaty, the barons of Lithuania tumultuously weldomed Vytautas as their King....Though that gesture may have been merely an episode of that banquet, the actual fact testifies that Jogailą, bearer of the title of Lithuanian Grand Duke who had departed for Poland a dozen years earlier, had now been forgotten by those Lithuanian leaders.

and that Vytautas, legally Jogailą's deputy, was acknowledged spontaneously as the only ruler of Lithuania. Tersely expressed, Jogailą's titular aureole of Grand Duke quickly began to dim. All his plans dnd designs for the Fatherland faded into the shadow of his cousin. As the 15th century dawned, Vytautas became not only in fact, but in law, the highest ruler of Lithuania.

Amid varied political movements, in the days of Vytautas the Great, further economic changes spread successively in Lithuania. The ruler directed much of his attention to trade, sponsored and protected it. With the cessation of wars in the west, Lithuanian goods which earlier travelled circuitously were now able to flow by the Nemunas river to the Sea, and directly to Koenigsburg, Danzig, and other Prussian cities. The increased income from exports enriched the land and strengthened the state's treasury. Vytautas propogated and defended merchants, securing them with the full weight of his authority. In addition to successful interior reforms to the Grand Duchy, he administered internal relations of the merchants, even those affecting larger individual centers of commerce.[45] So it is entirely reasonable that for many years after Vytautas' death, merchants referred to his reign as those "golden years."

The imports from the west to Lithuania, including hatchets, knives, scythes and other farming implements, had a very perceptible influence upon the land's progress, its production and export. And the weapons purchased strengthened the country's armed forces. From the Golden Horde in the east to the Baltic Sea in the west, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania became in all respects a mammoth entity in Vytautas' time, which no power would overcome, it seemed. In that glorious epoch, evidence was apparent of a change-over from a nature economy to a money economy. Taxes previously collected in kind began to be accepted in money, and not just in crops.[46] More and more exchanges were conducted with their own Lithuanian-designed coins. There were establihsed countermarks of Lithuanian origin to be placed upon uncertain foreign coins. The poured kapos were less and less frequently chopped into "small change" since the struck small coins better suited minor transactions. The silver poured pieces were reserved for major exchanges where the bid or asked price could be weighed more conveniently.

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[45] One example which comes to mind is the letter from Vytautas to Riga's Mayor Niktiborg, dated March 6, 1400, regulating commercial relations between Polotsk and Riga's merchants ("Sobr. gosud. gramot i dogovorov," II, 1819, page 15, #14.).

[46] See "Vytautas the Great," Kaunas, 1930, page 239.

As he took over from Skirgaila in 1392 the rule of the Grand Duchy, Vytautas found a lively operating coin Mint in Vilnius, striking the "small change/money" begun by Jogailą. As we see from date collected by Fedorov, Strončinski, Hutten-Czapski and other writers, the new deputy of Jogailą (Vytautas) did not stop the activity, and these coins continued to be struck. And it could not be otherwise. Vytautas had to present a friendly mien to Jogailą, and he needed money. And further, there was nothing on the coins instituted by Jogailą that could be unacceptable to Vytautas. There were the same symbols engraved upon them as were so recently used by both fathers of Jogailą and Vytautas and 10 of these coins' real worth practically equalled the Prague grosh's value, so the decimal system, to which Vytautas held, was maintained. After he had strengthened his rule, attended to the more important political problems facing him, and felt himself to be the real master in Vilnius, Vytautas made a small adjustment to those coins: alongside the spearhead, and below the cross, the letter "V" appeared, which was meant to indicate that these coins are issued by no one else but him, the actual ruler of the Grand Duchy.

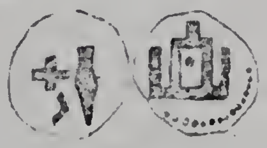

Figure 46. An example of Jogailą's Vilnius coins, complete with the first initial of Vytautas' name.

All coins of this type were struck at Vilnius. The appearance of the letter "V" on these coins became imperative in connection with the political changes at the capital, and with Vytautas' early initiated turnabout from his "deputy's loyalty" to Jogailą. This was one of the clearest demonstrations that Vytautas felt at home in Vilnius, that he determined to create Lithuanian history of his time himself, distaining to be guided by Jogailą, as had his former deputy, Skirgaila. If these same coins had been struck in Gardinas, as it appeared to one of our "numismatists" [Dr. Kačkus], what reasons would have persuaded the then young Vytautas to change the coin's appearance?